

Jonathan Elliott
Collected Poems (1985-2020)

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the morning is a stranger to itself
as the memory of another night passes
besides the scattered clothes on the floor
I sift through myself, looking for answers
why I never said hello, or goodbye

I make life too mysterious with the silences
an old friend tells me over the phone
the silences, they pass too, like the memories
along the pathways of earlier years
like faded photographs I look through

in those days of my childhood I was not afraid
of afternoons in the mud or walks through the
rain
now I am even scared of the cold, like the chill
could bring fever. I don't know why.

I guess it comes with getting old.

Silhouette of a girl in blue dress

The gaping hole that is the universe
transcends the fixtures of parking lights
and honking horns, cars whizzing around
corners
men delighting themselves in her features
as she stands up to make her way
across the furnace that is the pavement
I move my lips slowly
silently saying goodbye
when will I see you again?
it is just a joke I think to myself
in the next life
she will be dressed in yellow.

A little piece of candy

The doctor gives you an injection
to cure you of endless grief
and you notice the little statues
on his desk and the degrees
hanging from the wall.

This is where my poetry comes alive
you think to yourself as the needle goes on
this is where the words start to scream
howling at the moon, wandering away from
you
on the way out the door
you grab a little piece of candy
and think to yourself
how adorable.

In the morning you will awaken
and still be filled with sorrow.

Jazz in smoky bars

The tenor sax
speaks of thrilling days
when Mulligan ruled the world
and the clarinet says
Beiderbecke is back
you sit in bed dreaming
of jazz in smoky bar rooms
the days of Bop and blues
ringing in your ears
like a song from Miles Davis
you play with the idea
of getting a piano
filling the dark corridors
with music of a new age
but no one is listening anymore
the audience is plugged in
to rhythm making machines
that do not enjoy the nuance of mistakes
and timing is quantized perfectly
there is no oops
I forgot that note.

On a morning train

Her eyes are filled with memories
of far away lovers and torn romances
I stop myself from looking too hard
she is across the way

I peer out the window at the sun
when I arrive in Berkeley
I notice the ocean is gazing at the moon
still fragrant in the morning bliss
we gather our luggage and go separate ways

there are no goodbyes between strangers
and I get on a bus headed for the South side of
town
there will be the laughter of old friends
and cheap wine. We will dance in the pale
autumn

the future only lingers like an obsolete
machine
churning the waters of time with a spoon
in the lipid pools of darkness I will wonder
if there is elegance to the seasons of
wandering.

ERICA

Wednesday Afternoon
you wander the city streets
the swaying palm trees of Florida
bending with a cold wind

blown in from the arctic circle
you button your jacket
and wonder about a job
all the days are going by
with the time, like innocence, wasted
you pick up the pen
to write a poem
and defy the wasted hours
to explain to yourself
this is not a futile life
even this cold wind blowing
is a memory in the song of the poet
so now you would like to know
how to thrill the loneliness
and you see her smiling
the world perfect around her
no need to count the minutes
you think quietly to yourself
sitting by her side
everything is alright now
that I am in love.

You wonder what you should say to her
as she stands up and says goodbye.

Erica II

even time is a nuance
some forgotten tragedy
of another second wasted
some forgotten verse
forgetting to say I love you

I wanted to say stop
time has no memory
I adore you
I have no words
I fall into the emptiness
mute
unable to explain
what it is to feel in that moment

I wander away from myself
oblivion is no answer
I say the darkness does not speak, either
and still it has its power.

it was there I wanted to hold you
and dream
there was a sorrow in me
I am not the same

when I was a younger man
love was easy
then the days go by
and it feels more serious

I wanted to let you know
I wanted to let you, know.

Erica III

You hold onto the glistening candle
vibrant in a streak of moonlight
the clouds pass by and the sea is wrought
with memories of the afternoon
sinking slowly like the sun into evening

the morning designs itself against a
background
of hopeless dreamers and the glow of flames in
their eyes
our arms and legs entwined
in this moment that seems like a joyous season

why should we be afraid to love one another
in an age of madness
it would only be easier.

Emotions filled with children's laughter

they play outside in the afternoon
I hear them in the distance
their cries not going unnoticed.
I remember those times
when I was young and the magic of trees
the magic of a life without memories
how youth burns to be free
the second hand of the clock unwinding
taking the days with it
we grow old
and the tide brings new features
to the delicate and abstracted landscapes
we paint pictures to remember the sunlight
in flowing hair and dressing gowns
they are the signposts of civilizations
like graffiti on a subway tunnel
it should say
Van Gogh danced here
he was feeling free.

The Parakeet's Day Off

Yellow and green
sitting in his cage
he doesn't worry
about rising unemployment
the only thing that matters
is when it's time to change his seeds
in the afternoon
he whistles
and it puts me in a light mood
the little chirps are relentless
and he has a song of his own
he whistles and whistles
all day long
my little parakeet reminds me
that everything is alright
after all
we are each one of us
in a cage.

Tribute to the Jazz Age

I am finished rehearsing Baudelaire
and remaking the volumes of history
I cannot attribute to myself alone.

the real quiz of accidentals
is found in the language of jazz
the contrapuntal rhythms sway
in the blue of endless blue
Charlie Parker still has a place
in the human heart
it separates us from the animals
listening to him blow the horn
is our escape from misery
the deep meaning of knowledge transcended
in the features of his tonic romance
we are removed from the sickness
that is the futility of life
as we are reminded of his journey
through time and space
in the mystery of jazz.

The Seduction of Paris

Legions of Trojan men

staying off a Greek invasion
for the love of a single woman
betrothed to another man
the clash of civilizations
in mortal combat with each other
to win the prize of her affection.
The rage of pitiless time
marooning the Greeks on the land
far away from home
caught in a desperate struggle
to conquest history
these plights remind me how
pitiful war is, that entire cultures
thrown into upheaval
by personal grievances
marched to insane battles
for the sake of what could be solved
by diplomacy.

Have a Talk with Your Soul

The silence does not sound right
with the creaking of a door
moving into the stillness
with the flow of air
and the temperature changing.
Tell yourself it is ok
you have lived this life before
and there is nothing new under the sun
maybe we all begin again
resurrected into our perfect skins
to unlearn the things of the past
that swept us up in mystery.

It was the oblivion we sought to find
in nirvana.

there was some great gentle sadness
that lifted the burden from our shoulders
when we died
and we were reborn
to read poetry.

I sing a song of night,
a song of night,
I sing a song of day

a song of wonder
of the way

I sing a song of love
its mystery unfolding
I sing a song of laughter
even in the rain
I sing a song of winter
in the cool cool grass
I sing a song of hope
for something that might last
I sing a song of sorrow
for poet's often do

remembering the things past
the way I thought of you.
I sing a song of joy
for tears are often measured
and there is no use,
always crying.

I sing a song of living,
a song of living and of dying.

How Cold is the April Breeze?

My nocturne is a mighty wind
blowing across fragrant skin
the world relentless in its struggle
she is an etude, I know that now
it comes along in whispers
between strangers who share the feeling
of what it is to love the April breeze
so many of us acknowledge virtue
in the shining disc of the sun
with all its unique perfections
nothing seems too onerous
with a little sunlight dashed upon it.

Wait till you feel the strangeness
of a cold summer day, I tell myself
April is not through yet, still my heart
remembers
the warm summers of laughter
and the imperfect world making its way
along with the seasons
like a romantic bride off to see the whole of
Europe
on her exciting honeymoon.

She cannot wait for the rest of her life

with her new partner at her side

I wonder, does the sun have feelings?

A Cliché of Winter

the orange blanket wrapped around my skinny
legs as I sit in the creme colored bed staring
at the yellow walls
wondering what it is to love a girl, have a job,
get married, live happily ever after, watch
your business grow, see
your kids become adults, all those things that
never happened to me

I sometimes think about my friends who gave
up in the midst of despair,
despair, to the poet Hart, was like a cocktail
waitress leaving the bar
after a long night's work,

I sometimes wonder about them all, why they
gave up, why they could
not find joy in the ordinary things of life, it
bewilders me to think there
sorrow was so great, they could not find
passion in their lives

I try to look on the positive side of things at
least
they are nice yellow walls.
With the television turned on

That Sunday evening we cooked steaks
and laughed at the joke of our lives
the stagnant unending nothingness
we were slowly growing accustomed to

not even a fragrant candle in the house
to light our way, just the cold light bulbs
on the ceiling and in the lamps
while the television broadcast the unwatchable

I found myself in sorrow again, wondering of
the future
my fate unavoidable, it seems so far away from
me, in truth, I lived comfortably, but alone
I had several roommates but there was no
woman in my life

I think a good woman makes thinks genuine
and I wanted to live genuinely
but there was nobody
and writing words
is lonely business.

ask a truck driver
he will tell you the same thing.
lonely business

America with its wheels turning
and its markets churning
was looming in the bright lights

in front of me

but I did not know which way to go
and I was swimming in boredom
and forgetting myself in solitude

Wait for heaven to come

Answer me,
 is the door a lover
to the hinge
 in the creaking night
when the wind blows

I wonder
 does the song ever speak
of the notes that play it along

how many evenings have I spent
 in these years removed from everyone
like Salinger pacing his living room
trying to stay in character
 I lapsed into bed
 and began to type this
one more time

I told myself
I do it again
one more for the road
like an alcoholic rationalizing the next glass
the poet wanders through sentences

trying to forget oblivion

A Valentine's Day in the New Millennium

The soft warm air in the afternoon
spent dreaming
I awaken to a cup of coffee and a cigarette
a phone call from a friend
I should dream of a lover today
someone to hold me tight
through the nights of solitude
and remorse finds me like that old friend
alone and to myself in the pale light
of the new day

I wish I could learn to live more refinely
than these empty sheets and short walks
through the city streets

I never accomplished anything in my life

never fulfilled my destiny
that is my sadness

song of raging winter's flood
the rain thrilled through me
leaving me wet in most places
I almost wept at my plight
living day to day on the promise
of tomorrow

but the evening is forgiving
and I accept the bitter pill
of a life tormented by ruin
it is the painstaking memory of time
reiterating the near acceptance of the thing

the soft laughter of voices just beyond me
what can I give of myself in gratitude?

tonight I'm wearing my old man's shoes
the ones that bring on the blues
I'll be heading out to the fancy parts of town
to discover the new places and those unfound

and destiny has no answer to the questions on
my mind
what I hope to accomplish, what I just might
find

I'll put on a tie and walk along the avenues
straying through the murky streets alone
there is nothing to decide, it's the weekend

and the job has ended for now
I can rest easy in the morning and maybe
do my laundry and go to the gym

it's the same old routine I'm living in
I wonder about these dead end winters

and the mesmerizing signs of defeat on the
road

those homeless men who drift alongside the
boulevards
and carry hopeless cardboard messages like
please feed me

and I guess I'm lucky to have a place to go to
when all is said and done
I should relinquish my nerves and anxiety and
be more hopeful of the future

everything is going o.k. and I have to deliver
myself from the sinking feelings
that life is headed nowhere.

sadness
adrift
sorrows ensue
I feel lonely
angry, tired
exasperated

the hours go by
I count the minutes at work
waiting for the time to go

the desperation of poetry
not lost to me
I slip into it again

one more time
trying to feel the rhythm

of the words as they glide
across the page

the effort of writing takes away the worry
I can disappear into myself for awhile
and forget about things.

the infinite dream of madness
the one where I am a whale
lost on a lonely beach
or maybe a snake
sneaking through the grass
last night I dreamed I was a monkey
and I woke up disappointed that I am not
but there are subtle times of laughter in my
life
each moment is not entirely lost

I could drive my car along the avenues
go for a ride around town
I could smoke a long drawn out cigarette
and tell myself it's time to quit
I am waiting for the day when I finally listen to
myself
I never seem to get it through my brain
but the days are never dull and the dreams are
quite insane.

listen
I never wanted it to be this way
the one room without space
living in the emptiness of a boarding house
I tell myself
the future is yet to be determined
there is always tomorrow
a new day holding promise
don't allow yourself to be negative
fill the voids of life with pleasure
and you shall be fulfilled.

listen

I want you to know it doesn't have to feel
changeless
in a world of simple destiny
the horizon bends and shifts
time lingers on
and even the friendless find strangers
the night is a passionate place
where you can find love without remorse

so try not be down on yourself
even the circumstances will change
in the due course of time.

writing came so simply
it was like finding your soul
on a deserted street corner
it lifted the emptiness
into a dazzling set of events
that made the day worthwhile
even though it wasn't.
I gave myself to the page
each night
drafting the novel of my life
over and over again
constantly unhappy with the narrative
I chose poetry
because it is simpler
and easy to express how I am feeling
without the structure of the novel.
I moved along with the words
and they guided my way
through dismal times
that wreaked of solitude
I climbed upwards
trying to hold on

to bits of sky
that floated just beyond me

the fantastic night is such a rush
cars moving along the highway
with their lights streaming forwards
I go to dinner and have Chinese food
I get into bed early and play solitaire
the weekend is finally here
and no work tomorrow
I can sleep in late
maybe do my laundry
think of the girl who sits next to me at the
office
and try to not go crazy
with the idea that I'm in love with her

anyways it wouldn't be such a bad thing
to fall in love again

morning arrives
fresh and beautiful
I smoke cigarettes, eat some eggs
go back to sleep
I dream of the future
and we are all living under the ocean
I am trying to escape
and make it to dry land

but I guess the earth is destroyed
and there is nothing left above
no seven elevens no McDonald's
no nothing

I wake up feeling awkward
and the whole day sort of passes me by
I am left stuck for things to talk about
things to say,

anyways it was a beautiful day
I went for coffee and checked my email
at the local Starbucks coffee shop

I ordered a hot chocolate and enjoyed it
it was good to be on dry land

SUNDAY MORNING BLUES

got up
and my toe still hurt
it's been aching for months
I don't know what it is
but I got those
Sunday morning blues
I give some people a lift

to the thrift store
and pick up a pack of cigarettes
and try and make the most of the afternoon
tomorrow is another day at work
I'm trying to think up things to do
so I don't look like I'm slacking for the boss
the trouble is
there isn't enough to do anymore
and I'm afraid I'm dispensable
I got to stay on my toes
no matter how much they hurt
I got to keep my head above water
no matter how much it rains
and it's been raining all day

time in a myriad of moods
I am alive at least
living for the moment
whatever that brings

my needs are satisfied
I am not bothered by the boredom anymore
it comes with the tides, inevitable, plummeting
down I go

deep inside myself
to a place I cannot find

what can I speak of the darkness
that surrounds me
it is, after all, unspeakable
I do not know what face
the table takes
talking without knowing
or the clock ticking hours away

I only know of the self
that ever impressed stranger
who wanders through emptiness in silence

the clown bursts a balloon
an ice cream truck comes down the street
the kids all run out to get some
I live in an American town
filled with peanut butter and cornflakes
the laughter of icy moods
people barely surviving on city streets
rolling shopping carts down the boulevard
ringing with the sounds of broken bottles
and the world is alive to me
even in these broken hearted moods
that deliver me into silence
I stare around my empty room
and the silence consumes me
I am always afraid I am not doing enough
survival depends on me doing more
I tell myself in the deepening hours
that linger past the afternoons
here I spent dreaming of immortal time
and I was a stranger to myself

through most of it
I did not know what agony awaits me
in the knowledge that I am getting old
I wish time would go on without me
I don't want to be old and alone
I want to chase the ice cream truck
along with the rest of the scattered kids
dreaming their way across the landscape
I want youth to last infinitely
and for tomorrow to arrive without a glimpse
of fading time
or the memory of what has been

the palpitating heart
that grieves or knows no bounds to sorrow
is all I have when it comes to possessions
I try to convince myself that it is alright
everything will work out for the best
I lie and cheat myself to death
hoping for the time to recollect my thoughts

and error is like an old friend who cheats at
cards
wandering around the city streets alone at
night
lost with his bottle and old stories of soldiers
in the fight
what I have to say is best kept to myself
for there are no listening ears left in my life
only a pitiful collection of acquaintances that
hang on for dear life
just like me

I am out of my element
enjoying the fleeing time
in all its aspects and demeanor
what I know of time is there are not enough
tears in the world
to explain how I arrived in this languid pool of
indifference
only frozen hours in a day to arrive at
nothingness
and bitter sorrows that are not all mine

how can I uplift the human spirit with words?

Poem for Martin Ciccone

what are the empty chances
that a door has feelings
and doesn't appreciate being slammed?

I guess slim and none

a walk to the corner store with Martin
he orders a half red
and the counter clerk gives him
a bottle of Smirnoff
Martin waits until he is across the street
and then gulps it down like lemonade...
hiding the bottle in a staircase

I don't know what to say
when they kick him out of the house
for his recklessness

we walk around the city and talk about
how he needs to get a job
and I wonder what he is going to do
but he doesn't seem all that worried

after all is said and done everything is not that
bad

I mean he got his drink and now he's acting
jolly
in fact he's got enough money for one more
so the laughter is not yet dead

and Martin is not yet beaten.

what comes around

goes around
says the chair
to the floor
when I sit on you
do you feel my legs?

words have no dominion
only the heart

waits
tears come with turmoil
setting the mind
straight
I hear laughter in the corner of the room
and it is someone holding on for dear life
the ice cream is gone
and there are no mashed potatoes
I hold a grenade in my hand
but it does not explode
I am hoping for the best
it is all I can do
what else can I tell you
dear reader
the rest is up to your imagination
I am in the small room
type typing away
it is almost time to go to sleep
so I end this with a sigh

the weekend arrives fresh and early
I do not know what to do for dinner

so I sit around and wait, playing solitaire
holding my breath for answers that do not
come

I am mesmerized by the sudden quiet and that
dog in the next room is not barking incessantly
so I guess I am lucky for tonight.

Other than that it is a strange evening full of
mystery
the endless schemes of the week far behind
me now

I can concentrate on the card games and
super-bowl Sunday. I guess I am a fair
weather fan always rooting at the end of the
season .I crank the heat up in my room and it
gets hot quickly. I am waiting for the rain to
come or some sign of change. It always sneaks
up on me and leaves me surprised when it
comes so I want to be prepared for when it
finally gets here. I smoke too many cigarettes
and contemplate existence, it leaves me
baffled and confused but at least I can enjoy
the weekend.

Saturday morning up early with a cup of
coffee. A woman talks to herself and smokes
cigarettes

people moving about the city
grind of cars and confusion

I stop for gasoline

the afternoon is uneventful and I take a nap
I'm about to lose myself again in that tin pan
alley blues

the kind that overtakes me like the morning
news

I'm getting old and I wonder about my age

I could be like that woman at the coffee
counter jabbering away at myself looking for
an excuse to mutter inconsistencies of self
abuse stammering about the coming of the
times

I wonder what she was talking about
I guess it doesn't matter now

happiness walks down the lonely street with
his bags talking about strange things and
dangling a cigarette heading out towards some
unique destination all his own
happiness does not wait for answers from
anyone but goes on his way without remorse
and in solitude

what more can be written about the subject is
left to others who talk of having knowledge
but may not truly know
what it is to be happy in this life full of tears

happiness kicks a broken bottle down the
street and laughs
a blissful sense of contentment follows him
wherever he goes he doesn't care about the
weather or the time of day
he only goes where his heart leads him

life is about the search for meaning
amongst the ruins
of billboards, broken bottles, bus seats
we look for signs of life everywhere
and they find us in the gleam of a child's eye
waiting for mother on the front porch
every teeny bopper dreams of growing up
and getting the perfect job, the dream job
and getting married, having kids, raising a
family
only we notice as we get older that things
aren't so perfect, that we have to make
concessions
that maybe everything isn't so fantastic
as we once believed it could be

no. we grow old and life bites us on the ass
like a sad old dog. We try to fit in the mold
of what the perfect picture should seem like
but it never really works out that way.

we take the subways and freeways off to our
cubicles and each and every day fight for our
lives trying not
to dissolve completely into boredom, how
wretched.
the setting sun
life goes on
the moon comes up
stars light the sky
I think of the girl
popsicles and candy flavored ice cream
everyday a new day
the flowers in the garden
the mop behind the gate
the chairs in the patio
everything reminds me of life
continuously moving ahead
I go to work
another day another dollar
the clouds overhead
the traffic jam on the way home
taking my medication
speaking in absolutes
like there is no way out
I might as well feel
bliss.

the diminished note of music
cackling of the crows
rain on the boulevard
a long talk with the boss
go back to my desk
wondering how I didn't get fired
feeling my way through the work
doing the filing
looking for a stapler
going to the bank to make a deposit
coming home and eating chicken
fixing the brake light on the car
feeling the sting of the shower on my
fingertips
wondering if my circulation is going bad

smoking too many cigarettes
nothing to relieve the stress
got to calm down this anxiety
nothing to do but laugh
laugh clown, laugh

emptiness writes you a letter saying goodbye
you tear it up and work yourself into a mess
the darkness holds no answers
you let your spirits lift high
and you soar over clouds and stars in the sky
what a far reach this is
you never thought you would get old
then suddenly it hits you like a ton of bricks
what did you waste your life doing
you wonder to the emptiness
there is nothing like it
it has no equal
you get so lonely at times
it almost makes you puke
trying to make sense of the silences
that come between you and your age

every-time you think about it
it turns your gut
you never get used to it
the feeling that you are getting old
and life has lost all meaning
what should you tell the emptiness
in all its lost glory

you see her for your first date in years
on a Sunday night while the Academy awards
are playing
on the television at the bar
dinner goes alright and you say goodnight and
call her
the following Thursday evening
you leave a message and she never calls back
you wonder if it is something you said
maybe the part about making ten dollars an
hour
maybe it wasn't good enough for her
maybe she just isn't interested anymore
so you decide not to call her again
but the trouble is you can't stop thinking of
her
you think about the way she was playing with
her straw
and it drives you wild
there's nothing you can say or do anymore
she hasn't returned your call and I guess it's
over
between the two of you
it's hard to let go of what seemed like a sure
thing
but the world is filled with women and there is
a new one

around every corner so if you weren't good
enough for this one. Maybe the next one that
comes along will feel a little less challenged by
how little money you make
you can't make the whole world dance anyway

let this be a lesson to you
you can't always make things happen
life has a funny way of throwing you curve
balls
it isn't the insouciance of youth or the
meek reminder of impending age
that brings you to the breaking point
it is the relentless onslaught of boredom
breathing down your neck like a phantom
on a rampage with the test of time
that leads you to these bleak destinations
what I have learned is to never be misled
by heartbreak, it comes and goes
you never see it coming or going
it lingers like a Frank Sinatra ballad
and tugs at your heartstrings
one of these memorable evenings
I shall awaken out of slumber to discover
the real chance at love
and I shall be mesmerized by perfect beauty
when it finally comes along and takes me by
the hand
saying this is your day cowboy
do you want to dance now?

I was a wild one in my youth
always taking chances
with drugs, women, liquor
anything to get my heart started

in those hollow days before I got older
life seemed like a tragic game
and I was always the comic in the act
ever playing the stranger for the reckless
audience
I got over myself quickly
and never realized anything
of particular importance
never concerned by the genuine issues
rioting in Egypt, Libya gone mad
life was like a clock stopped
the time gently moving ahead regardless
maybe I was a magician or a train conductor in
a past life
I have no memory of those things
we are born with a blank slate
then we grow up and our heads are clouded by
ideas
like the first time you kiss a girl
and you get that ringing in your ears
or maybe she climbs on top of you
and you make love for the first time
isn't life sensational the way things happen
you never take the time to notice
it all takes place so mysteriously
we just run around filling the void with spaces
of our own making, designs to fit eternity.

my nose is stuffed up
I have a cold
the heater is on

I play cards to pass the time
for lunch I go out with my Mother and sister
and
Aunt Doria is here from New York
she is taking my sister's kid to the toy store
I blow my nose at the table
Aunt Doria wants to know if the Brown Derby
is still in business
my Mother says it has been gone for years
I order a glass of orange juice and some
French toast
the meal is delicious

song of the night singing to itself

the steel girders and streetworkers
hustling to the same rhythm of life
each day a new adventure
they are laying pipes along the avenue
digging up the street and climbing into holes
I walk along the park during my lunch break
I smoke cigarettes and stop for pizza
the city is alive with noise, traffic jams
people all on their way someplace
I walk around the block and return to work
I punch in at the time clock and head back up
the stairs
sometimes it feels like my life is going
nowhere
I read of the old days in Dos Passos and want
to make something of myself
I don't know what it takes to do that
maybe I don't have it in me
I don't know anymore
perhaps I read too much Bukowski
I could get a job at the post office and not
complain
or drink my life away what would be the
difference

the rain came down all day
we stopped inside a small cafe for brunch
all you can eat eggs and coffee with juice
it was a nice place and they had a musician
playing flamingo guitar.
I tipped him five dollars

the rain kept coming down and I fell back into
bed
tomorrow is another day of work and the
weekend will be over
I will try to enjoy the time I have
the hours are filled with wonder
and my life does not seem so empty
in the strains of the music
I recognize the songs he plays and they cloud
my memory

in the rush of the wind and the rain
I ran down the street not wanting to get wet
after eating won ton soup at the Chinese
restaurant
Liz Taylor died today at age 79
and I wondered what it would be like to live
the circus life
always in the forever watchful eye of the
media
I wondered if she died gracefully or was it
painful
anyways, it rained all day and I got in bed
early
"your a fucking stupid bitch" I hear somebody
scream
from down the hallway
then there is the slam of the door
and a siren from the distance
the room is cold and I have thoughts about
turning on the heat but I don't want to get out
of the bed
so I keep typing and forget about it
the siren in the distance gets closer
I hear footsteps in the hallway
at least the dog isn't barking next door

Mark wanted to order a cocktail
but I said forget about it
he says yeah just as well
every time he drinks he gets drunk

and ends up getting arrested
they deported him from Mexico
because he didn't have any money
he likes to wear a lot of jewelry
and has tattoos all over his body
he borrows money all the time
and always pays it back
in the end he is a good friend
someone I can count on
he has a girlfriend named Linda
and she takes so much abuse I don't
know how she puts up with him
"tell the world you love me" he says to her
she says I love you and he says louder
so the world can hear.
she says what in the world are you talking
about and he laughs and says ah I was only
joking. It goes on like that forever the two of
them never stop kidding each other and they
make a good couple. sometimes I wish I wasn't
so alone
but that's just the way it is.

Monday is the day I see my therapist
he comes over and I plop down on the couch
or we sit outside in the garden and talk
he thinks I should be doing more
more with my life
I go to bed about seven thirty and I sleep
for twelve hours
he says it's no good I have to fill up my
schedule
so he makes a schedule for me and tells me
I should do this and that
I tell him don't worry about it I like to read
and write poetry and that keeps me busy

but he says there has to be more in my life
to keep me active and alert
I don't know what to say I never have much to
do
I haven't been writing very much these days
and I only seem to read on my lunch hour.
So I guess he's right I have to fill up my
schedule
find more things to occupy my time with
and time, precious time, keeps moving
forward.

I laugh and tell myself this is the last cigarette
I am done killing myself like it is a joke
I am tired of the lonely hours wasting away
it doesn't do any good to worry anymore
about loneliness or the price of gas
the morning will bring another day
and I shall go into it with courage
why worry of it's the last one or the first
I cannot really understand my own sorrow
it has its way of laughing at me
I travel towards some unique destination
that is solely my own
sometimes I cannot put words to the feelings
that eat me up inside
I only notice the terror of not feeling wanted
by another living being on earth
and going my own way is so easy
when we walk along the delicate afternoon.
singing this is the gospel of a new age

we have to leave our faith behind us
and know tomorrow is just around the corner
have a happy day

the stolen moments of time bring solace
on these Sunday afternoons
today is Easter and the neighbors have a
bunny pinata
we went to the casino bakery for brunch
and afterwards I took a nap and then got up
went to the drug store to pick up some
pictures
that were developing from a concert the night
before
I keep listening for the chirp of birds but it is
quiet
last night I had a dream about a huge
earthquake
and the ground was sliding out from
underneath me
in the dream I was partially underwater
it was pleasant to wake up to dry land

I keep telling myself it is time to quit
cigarettes
but I never seem to manage to be able to do it
I have myself a deadline for my birthday and
maybe I'll stick to it
I certainly hope so

Mother's Day

We all met at my sister's house and my mother
and I
cooked crepes and we ate strawberries outside
it was a nice day for a Sunday and I played
soccer
with the kid and spilled coffee on my pants

I read the newspapers about Osama Bin Laden
and his capture then the basketball game

came on and I was a little bit frustrated to be at a large house with children running around not having any kids of my own and me living in a rooming house across town. It seems like I have nothing to show for my life and these days only serve to remind me how dismal my life really is.

I try not to let it get me down though and continue to write despite myself.
This morning I got up early and thought it was Monday and I didn't realize it wasn't until I got downstairs to smoke a cigarette.

It's kind of sad not having my Pop around on Mother's Day and I brought her a rose and that was good for a smile.

the soft feelings of yesterday spill out to the streets

and I wait outside a Church thinking of
tomorrow
where will I be in a thousand years from now
is there resurrection after death? Or do we
drift
like strangers into the afterlife never knowing
what
we wanted to become. Are our dreams ever
realized?

what becomes of the soul after our lives have
been spent?
Do we return to earth as a screaming baby?

time into timelessness
reason has no answers
space in the infinite
moments of silence
I bring you my mood
in all it's deep meaning
suddenly a pin drops
to the floor
echoes of cheers in the afternoon
the adoring crowd, gift of laughter
I hear you whisper in his ear
how you love and what it is
there is no place like the present
in the afterglow of this romance
you are still a stranger to yourself
not letting go of the oblivion
that searches the darkness beyond
what truths we hold to be evident
I remember her kiss fondly
it was an enchanting time for me

a wandering spirit in the light
dancing in the mist of night
knows not the truth
of what is what
of insight

how do we keep ourselves hidden from
strangers?

what is the secret of eternity
do we acknowledge that death is merely a
transition
or is it a finality?

we harbor empty souls, yes we do
they move along the crowded avenues

we make our wishes into dreams
and carry with us impossible schemes

we march ourselves to our ends
and leave aside all memory of our friends

no one really knows what lies beyond
our sullen graves shrouded by dirt
Lunch With Alex

whispers candidly flee by sliver of light
lost in the reflection on the table
an old friend you haven't seen in years arrives
for lunch
you talk about her mother and the days gone
by

there were so many happy times
and she says you know I was never really
happy
that is enough to leave you wondering
but at least poetry is a good thing
the thoughts of today recorded like a ledger
you wonder if the account is in credit or debit
what will be the result of your latest
transmission?
will it be well received by a class of sixth
graders
somewhere in the distant future?
or will your thoughts timelessly collide with
the universe
never finding a printed audience?
it is hard to know what the future holds for
your ideas
but you do know that you do not write for an
audience
you write for yourself, to keep in touch with
the soul

I wore my father's sweater today
the peach one
it was a strange feeling after all these years
to finally feel close to him
he died eight years ago
and not a day goes by I don't think of him

I took a walk along the park and went to lunch
at the market
I smelled it a couple of times to remind me of
the way he was
and I don't think I can toss aside the feeling of
these memories
I have of him.

shadows fall murkily on the concrete
chasing the light and dark
I walk along the drizzling aired out avenues
and search myself for meaning
another Saturday morning alone with these
feelings
I get tired easily and slip back into bed
I went out for eggs and toast, had some coffee
but the day was gloomy and I did not know
what to do
so I decided to try and write something about
it and
this is what you're getting so try to enjoy it
it's been a year since I got to this place and I
have a roommate who stinks up the bathroom
he leaves his clothes all over the floor and
borrows money
I don't mind as long as he pays me back
but I got those wishful thinking blues again
today
I have to do some laundry and buy toothpaste
I told my friend John that I would take him to
the market and get his prescription filled.

Smoke a cigarette in my room and wish I was
someplace else.
then get up and we go for the pills
he wants to stop at a smoke shop for a minute
so I pull the car around in the parking lot and
he gets out
there I am waiting in a parking lot
nothing to do but wait
the waiting game is something I do best
I am always caught in that extravagant
moment of having
to wait for somebody else.

I sweep you off your feet
you let me twist your hair
I feel a sense of time slipping away
when I am deep inside you
the world has its passions
and I watch you glow from the distance
there are things about you perhaps I will never
understand
what a foolish heart is mine
I dance at the thought of your name
happiness returns like a long lost friend
I, too, am swept away in the romance of it
making love is such a pleasure
we explore one another in the afternoons

I wake up from a dream and realize
I am still alone.
It all happened in my sleep
and there is no one there to comfort me
what a reality
a stone cold summer

past interludes of blue moods and discussion
I eat spaghetti in silence and clear my plate
solitary transitions into loneliness follow along
as I escape into my room for more silences
the endless feelings of emptiness surround me
I am alone with my oblivion and laughter
what subtle hours linger through the moments
I am driven off course, silhouette of my body
on the wall
there is nothing new under the sun,
Ecclesiastes.
why do I wander away from myself forgetting
to laugh
at all the dim-witted excuses I have fabricated
of my life

I dream of torrential seas enveloping the
coast,
the water pouring in everywhere, people
trying to hide
but maybe I am trying to hide from myself
not knowing what tomorrow brings
I could die in a sea of memories
or live to see another day
what would it matter, either way
I am no longer aware of my own feelings
they used to save me from everything
past impending darkness on the landscape
I carve out the words to save my screaming
soul
and the silences are empty of thoughts
how shallow are our graves in the moonlight
I wonder if this is my only chance to live
or will there be a resurrection?

perhaps we are destined to live our lives never
really knowing what fear is there to death, do
we move beyond into afterlife?
I am a false personification of youth, my hair
grey my teeth yellow
I give myself the pride of understanding
not really aware of the tide pulling the sun
underneath it

we cross paths in the afternoon and I see you
smiling.

time keeps beating me up
like a startled wrestler
writhing in the ring
legs twisted into arms
flailing for room to regain balance

the fighter poised to deliver the knockout blow
time keeps tormenting me
telling me I cannot accomplish
what it is I set out to do
it makes me think of the sorrows of memory
dying in a summer breeze
the tortured souls who wander the streets
in search of a place to sleep
seem to elude time and stay away from it
they carry blankets on their shoulders
and beg for money on the side of the road
I wonder what will become of me when I get
old
will I find love and happiness or forever be
alone?
I always have the poetry though and that
keeps me thoughtful and alive, dim as the
truth may be
I will always have poetry.

sadness creeps up on you and says stay
in the moments you were most happy

it's like an old friend you haven't seen in years
who calls you on the phone just for laughs
it makes you wonder about yourself
what is life about?

sadness makes its way through the cracks in
the walls
and seeps into your bed and finds you alone
waiting for time to immortalize you
what you know of sadness takes your time
and leaves you whistling in the dark
hoping for more time to sort things out

sadness lifts the clouds into their flight and
blocks the sun
raining down on you in the empty winter
season
taking with it all remnants of your life
it relinquishes nothing to the night,

leaving you petrified and tormented like a
scorned lover
dreaming of that one last kiss before you said
goodbye
you want another try, something to hope for
and the sadness
is there like the hopelessness, invading your
life like an enemy.

Have a beer on me Bukowski

It must be something to work at the post office
and come home to a gallon of vodka
writing the words for generations to ponder
in the dim light of a flea ridden room
downtown somewhere
the paint cracking off the walls and the
landlord
beating on your door
I thought of you in the empty hours
and wondered what you must have been like
what the poetry meant to you
in the bleakness of your life
that you cherished.

You made the world such an exciting place
with all your stories and I know that if I gave
you a poem you would think it was trash
and possibly even feel badly you had bothered
to read it.

Have a beer in heaven for me Bukowski,
sip it slow, cool and beautiful
your poetry wafts through the air as the
timeless relic of an age when once the world
was mad with excitement, war and love all the
cheap bartenders you must have known are
probably there with you

you don't have to worry about losing your
temper and getting kicked out anymore

the only things left are your words to
transform our dull lives into brilliance.

Moving Day

Pack up my shirts and pants
put the toothpaste in a plastic bag
move my computer and boxes upstairs
to the new room, with a new roommate

I wonder how this will be
change is always exciting
the air conditioner is on in the new place
it is cool and he is fairly neat
which will be a big change from my slob friend
I used to live with.

So now I have to unpack all the boxes and find
a place
for all the little things I have collected, the
picture of my father
for instance, is still in a box, I haven't found a
place to hang it.

I have lots of stuff to go through and maybe
the change will do me good
a change of pace might spark some inspiration
down the line
I don't know how different it will be, but it's
one floor up

the silence grows and carries you with it
Justin is sleeping in the library
he went out and used heroin today
so they won't let him back in his room
tomorrow he is leaving for good
I wonder what a night's rest he will get
knowing tomorrow he has no place to go
I am comfortable in my room and nothing has
changed for me
I feel sorry for the kid and there is nothing I
can do about it
he kept screwing up and that is the truth of it
so now another dear person leaves my life
I wish there was something I could say or do
to change things
but there is nothing anyone can do for the
addict who suffers
the library was cold and they put a mattress
on the floor
maybe I will see him in the morning and say
goodbye.

A Warm Summer Day

I slept all morning
feeling like I would never get out of bed
I got up eventually
and went down the street for some eggs
hash-browns, bacon and toast
a cup of coffee
then I went for a drive with a friend and got
some more coffee
eventually returning to my dark lonely room
I smoked a cigarette and my sister called to
invite me to a barbecue
then I sat alone in the room awhile
not knowing if I was awake or dreaming
it was very quiet and I felt dead to the world
my life is a restless comedy of errors and I am
always making up excuses
why I shouldn't do anything
I guess I'd rather do nothing.
A warm summer day, I should be at the beach
or someplace fantastic
but I sit in my little room dreaming
I could be doing so many things
but I'll leave them for tomorrow
and act like today never happened.

emotionless
torn to myself
lying in bed
resigned
to life
telling myself
not to worry
about the future
waiting
for the birth of a new day
each moment
bringing me closer
to destiny

cheese ravioli at Victor's
then back in my air conditioned room
brush my teeth
get into bed
waiting to fall asleep
another day passes by
sitting in my underwear
scratching myself
I wonder if I will have nice dreams

get the car washed and go for ice cream
another weekend day passes by
my new roommate moved out yesterday
so the room is empty and I am alone
another cheese ravioli afternoon and I wait
to go to the movies and see Captain America
the boss laid me off on Wednesdays so here I
am in the middle of the week with nothing to
do
I guess I could practice the piano and do my
laundry
maybe call some friends on the telephone and
shoot the breeze
otherwise life is not very exciting

the details
life is short lived among them
we get lost in the mixture of fact and fantasy
I wonder what it is to eternal sleep
whether we arrive at some unique destination
or rest forever in the clouds

I got my hair cut today
and went to my Mother's for breakfast
we cooked scrambled eggs and bacon
I made some Hawaiian Hazelnut coffee
and it was good.

today is my father's birthday
had he lived he would have been 84
but he died ten years ago
in a cold hospital bed
stuck on a morphine drip

I told him not to go in for the operation
but he said medicine was good and he
wouldn't listen

I only know that in death we cast no shadow

life wanders away
a hippopotamus on the rampage
does not see the hunter
we stray from one another
each taking turns at love
while the endless hours awaken us
we dream of pot roast and summertime
the lives we lead are not our own
we may live for ourselves
but our actions speak towards others
what we have found in the dust of our lives
is not unique to us
we only know what it is we learn
how can the seasons be changeless?
in the immortal future beauty will not be
ageless
time is like a gift we are given for a brief while
the spectacle of existence is but a fleeting
glimpse
ask me to dance, lover.

speak to me
of love
and hollow things
that breathless age
of remorse
now distant
in the future of a glimpse
what we have now
is not eternal
it will rest
with us
I have seen the moment fade
as it comes into view
speak to me
of life
and what it is you do

the motion of time
is divine
and divides essence from the unseen
contemplating jazz in blue moods
I watched myself get old and grey
it did not happen all at once
but it left me weary
all the same

Jason called from the hospital
he's been in the psych ward for a week now
he says his father is starting
a conservator-ship
so that the doctor can take care of him

Jason is a brilliant musician and he wants to
win a Grammy award.

He says that next year is going to win and he
is going to take me to the awards show.

He likes to smoke pot and listen to Bob
Marley.

He has a dog named Morris and we have a
standing joke that I am going to eat the dog.

listless on a Saturday afternoon
coffee and a bagel, smoke cigarettes
call my friend Paul in Palm Beach
hang out in bed listening to the birds outside
I have to take new medication and they say
that some of the side effects are constipation,
low white cell count, confusion and yellowing
of the eyes and skin. I don't want to take the
drug
but the doctor says I have to, that without it
I'll
get delusional, start to hallucinate...I doubt it.

I wonder if I will suffer too much on the new
drug
it's all ridiculous to me
life is a big game

and I am just a clown in the circus
laugh, clown, laugh

you give it away
it takes the whole day through
to find you

your motionless past
it just cannot last

whatever will be will be
you'll certainly see

the day goes right by
you don't even try
and still love's behind you

you spell out the news
of jazz and the blues

but time drifts on by
did you think that I
would forget you?

you do it again
you make your mistakes
painful how the heart breaks

night makes a retreat into morning
you wait for the hours of sleep to fade
torn in the memories of dream

what simple fate lies here
awake in the moment of time, listening
you were aware of certain feelings

they came to you as the dawn was creeping in
like a stranger in an episode of drama

they told you of your past and certain years
that are now far beyond you

what did the dreams tell
did they spell your fate
or were they merely passing reflections of
your youth?

the early hours of night
I lose myself again
tired of the extreme
I have to be careful
not to let the past slip away

I go there
to the depths of my sorrow
where remorse has no friends
I believe in life
it is so elegant and beautiful
cognizant of change
the turmoil of existence
tears into me
I relax in the evenings
the sun goes down in the sky
there is an old tree in my backyard
I don't trust myself with my soul
where am I going to after this?

Mary Ellen Ave.

We lived on a quiet street
in those days
We played with Tonka toys
and ate play dough
we had slinkies
and batman and robin costumes
we ran around the kitchen
chasing one another
with plastic swords

and we grew up and moved
to the other side of the hill.

but there are always the fond memories
of Mary Ellen Avenue.

The drizzle of winter coming upon the
fuschia dresses walking along the city street
the disenchantment of a Friday night movie
the laughter of the homeless, bus rides and
doughnuts

It is the serenity of morning I seek!
the coffee cup and the element of reflection
during that moment
you awaken to the mystique of a new day.

I am dreaming again of history in all its
fortifications.

Twilight sympathizes with disaster I think
but the revenue of industry does not
understand
it is the wheel we grind each day in our ways
trying to forget why it is we are there

we forget our nose to it,
the sparks shooting out from our nostrils
as the seamless afternoon collides with
evening
and calls the dinner bell to a thousand
sleeping giants.

Why speak of love?

the oblivion of my own mystery,
they said it was a fantasy, the ghost in
Hamlet

even while the guards were on patrol.

I sought myself in these words
thinking the poetry does not disappear

but remains in the fragrance of memory
and even the scent calls forth new things.

I go with it, the poem, it is my destiny, my best
friend

it is the nuance of the day, the package
getting delivered on the Sunset Avenue streets
and time drifting by colliding into the space
and time, refreshing each gesture
with a glance, every word, its own
circumstance.

How many times I have told myself what a
failure I am not knowing of the success of each
new sentence what faith brings, what fate
relates to strangers in the bleakness
of an apple turnover or a raspberry smoothie

I tell myself to forget the moments I dreamed
and not give in to them
for it is the things we do when we are
awakened that is truly dream
the next world is something about the one we
make today but did not have the time to
acknowledge.

How many times I have drilled the keys into
the page wondering if it hurts like an injection,
the fallen tree
the only true hero in this battle of memory

I sink into the drama of a lifestyle and remain
in the shadows of that daylight that do not
smell
of rotten news and tomorrow's mess.
Why kid myself about it?
wondering what she will do
getting the next letter
 on her way
towards some new place
without me.

I have the companionship
of a parakeet who tells me
everything is alright
 I can do just as well
to forget the midnight girls looking
 for a good time with someone else
other than
 those
 clutching
thin dimes

I tell myself it is not me that is ruined

but the history of civilization,
that I will be just fine
wrapped around the warm blanket
that is the poem.

Why kid myself about it?

You gesture for the check and the waitress
returns
with the rest of the meal all wrapped up and
ready
to take home for lunch the next day.

You tell yourself it was a good time and try to
remember the conversation. The talk, all the
talk, about getting a job
trying to make something of yourself. What is
it, you wondered am I making?

In the morning you read Frank O'Hara and
laughed as he seemed so mesmerized by the
movies.

In the afternoon glow you played with your
mind and tricked it
into writing some more. You told yourself it
was not all masturbation,
there were certain words forgotten, they did
not disappear, they were the
poem.

The controversy
of time
comes with its passing
and everyone
has their own rendition
of what is was,
that was happening.

the artist
can point to his creation
and say
this is what happened.



Painting by Rozzell Sykes

Listen to me
says the page
dreaming at you

I speak to you
of history
and ages of humanity
you will soon forget

unless
you continue
to read.

Making A Radical Shift

You play the ponies,
it isn't always left or right
the unemployed men standing about
with their folded racing forms.

Sometimes you get lucky and sometimes
you don't, feel like one anyway

the old days stretched before you
like the blue horse in the seventh.

go baby, go baby
scotty screamed in the fifth.

The Laughter

You put the laughter on the table
with your folded napkin and a copy of Thoreau
who saw beauty in the reflection
of light on water

when the time comes I will bury my soul
in the emptiness of these schemes
which contrive to melt my wings
as I glide towards the sun
with my father.

On the day Kennedy died all the angels wept
and from that moment on,
all the clowns were put on the payroll
to make sure the government contracts went
through
for their orders of necessity, more balloons,
noise makers, plastic bouncing balls, a million
mini tricycles, everything a clown could ever
need.

Some wandered away from the herd
in search of their own shadows and silent
places
to meditate and realize the truth,
others fell over themselves to serve as slaves

at the double mint factory and worked on
large conveyor belts that produced collective
mind distortion
and various gadgets with warning labels.

the vulnerable seers of philosophy and poetry

were gathered together in where houses
and all their work stored in boxes to remain
forever
unseen.

Mercury rose from the spatial horizon
and froze the ink of sonnets turning the ink a
certain shade of pink,
worlds fell into themselves
people falling apart, grasping at soda bottles
and delicate chocolate treats,

secretaries marched into court wearing green
coats and yellow shoes screaming "this is so
unfair" as the court clerks returned from
restrooms pushing up their underwear while
checking their watches.

The President sat up all night working on his
outline
double checking the mistakes,
making sure they were all there,
not wanting to leave anything out.

The people who were not called spent their
time in public parks and walked through the
night searching for the mattresses left under
freeways
before spending their last dollar on cherry
flavored cigars

A Night at the Powerhouse

Lucky says, you don't know me
sometimes I drink too much,
she's a funny girl with tattoos
and the bartender is from Texas
and is a UFO expert,
the crowd is always the same
and everybody knows everybody
I drink Old Milwaukee and it's a dollar twenty
five

there is a dart board in the back of the place
and I'm not very good at it,
the bar is on Highland and Hollywood Blvd.
It's named after Joe Powers who fought at
Normandy,

they stole his money and forced him to sell
the place, it was a shame after fifty years,
I remember I used to see Joe standing outside
in his best new suit at the top of the morning
with his broom, sweeping the front,
and he always smiled at said hello,
sometimes I would stop in during the
afternoon and we'd talk about the old days, the
war, the invasion, the liberation of France, all
the girls afterwards,

he'd pour the drinks and we'd watch the
ballgames
and the room was dark and musty
but I really love that place.

Bogart is Rolling a Cigarette

The coffee is good here. It's afternoon
and nothing to do for a change.

On the wall of the cafe there are pictures of
the old film stars.
Dino is playing pool with Frankie and Sammy.

Montage

Feature of the bicyclist, pedaling down the
broken boulevard,
the earth unfolds, excreting the substance of
an enormous viola, strings
uncoiling onto the concrete, strangling the
plumbing below, water
now scarce in arid regions,

Figaro, Figaro, cries the violinist, his
partner in crime suddenly
without instrument, as the viola magnifies in
the lens, becoming merely
grains of wood in the close up, the trees
choking in smog, sunlight
streaks across the fields and ferments wine,
looking at itself in the
reflection of a rear view mirror,

the cold point of time stops for a motion of
ridicule, the conviction
to ignore virtue and replace the valves near
the steering wheel with the
breaks lubricated by adrenaline, the perfect
spot becomes a fishpond and
the hook baited with cheese, the line twitches
for a split second, it was
only the nibble of a frog,

without anything to do, the poet sniffs his
watch for the fragrance
of perfume and feels only the cold steel of the
face of the clock, listen to
this, says the bedbug to the crab, we have no
choice but to march
towards the balcony and declare our freedom,
to liberate ourselves
before ultimate fumigation, the honeybee
sucking the life out of purple flowers,
at the same time, pollinating,

inflicting misery to inspire insanity, the cast
of the show decides to change scenes in mid-
production and protest the award ceremony,
declaring an end to the world and beginning
their donation campaign, with a word from
our sponsors,

in the adapted version, Cinderella is
sleeping on stacks of newspaper
and eating spare radio parts, the montage
begins with a lobster crawling out of
its hole clutching a curling iron, looking for a
power generator for his table lamp

the calendar filled with IED fatalities, the
lobster calls his doctor to
change the appointment time, with a claw
finger, he breaks off a piece of coral
and feeds it to spiders who have arrived in
scuba gear searching for the relics of
a lost civilization amidst shark turds and sand.

The Creamless Afternoon

With my breakfast sandwich and coffee
I drove to the office, noticing the Court
summons
on my seat, I remembered it was time to make
an appearance at the judge for my license and
related matters,

suddenly I remembered the girl from last
night
and in the dream she took my hand and led
me
to the destination unknown, the music played
I awakened from the dream and saw a bottle
of liquid paper next to a bottle of sterilizer

then I'm in the creamy scene
saying goodbye, handing in the keys
send me your hours, nothing is getting Dunn,
we have one empty house, you have no
passion,

so I disappear into myself and the cool water
gosh, I thought I was supposed to be lonely at
the library
the size of the scene is proportional to the
volume of alcohol

for instance, if we are drinking champagne
together,
someone might be in trouble, or if we have a
glass of jurisprudence, there might be a need
for a five drink cut off.

Monday Morning Eggs Florentine

Delray Beach, Florida, March 2008

I gaze into the oblivion again
as jazz plays in the cafe and
yesterday was Easter
I thought of those days long ago
at the Country club
where hundreds of us kids
would run around looking

for those plastic eggs with the Hershey's
kisses in them.

and morality and rules seem to mean nothing
now
in the disappearance of all that was sacred
well maybe I'll come back later and order
some coffee

I take a long walk down the street smoking
my Mayorga Nicaraguan cigar and it tastes
pretty good
there is an old black woman sitting on the
bench and she looks like someone I used to
know, a long time ago.

Florida is like a certain penal colony and
maybe I am a prisoner
waiting for the rest of my life to vanish like
this cup of hot chocolate.

I practice the piano in between doctor's
appointments and discussions of injections.

Tomorrow I will wake up and the nightmare
will begin again.

The Cushioned Chairs

I am not the waking ghost of Santa Claus
or the pulp of Betty Grable's orange juice

in a Palm Springs night of effusion and
recalcitrance

learning speaks to me in measures

ignoble about suffering
the dominion of men is far reaching

warm air pulsing, oblivious, masquerading
a stranger in Grand Central
sleeping on stairs

the train arrives
you run through the terminal
clutching your ticket

think
the future is the enemy of science
which must pretend it does not exist

in order to convince you
how much you need them
that is why

I am sitting in the library
in a cushioned chair

sorting eternity
through unseen pages

I glimpse at the moon at night
in the shrouded mist of clouds
hard to see, unimaginable lurking drama
photographs of my hallucination
demeaning the entirety of life

for an orgiastic cult of nervous wrecks
who cannot stand to be around themselves
let alone other people

I catch myself
twisting words
it's what I do

there is nothing to feel better about

only people placed involuntarily in our lives
who have no place in it

Seeing Through the Stretch

The little people make their way through

the turn stiles, rummaging through the
garbage bins
looking for old racing forms as the horses
reach the gate, there is the sound of a bell
as the one and a quarter mile begins,

I've got the fifth horse and lose for the
third straight race,

Forgetting to tie one's shoes
a person remembers

on their way down the stairs

You could almost hear the door opening
come in, she must have said
the other end of the line going dead

as the other man walked in.

I told myself tomorrow is another day
and took my pen
to write again.

I said the earth spins for a reason
and maybe this is it.

She never said hello again
and my world unfolded into shadows
and I pretended to enjoy the moments
she was away.

Applause

Then, loving you
and all of my attentions
remaining on this subject.
Telling myself, the past
is not the same as the future,
only, perhaps, more beautiful,
knowing it was always too late
then thinking no, last time it
was too early, and this time
different. What can I say to
influence myself more to
love you? Do you think at this
time I need convincing?

Then to say, all these moments
I did not consider staying would seem
futile because it was more the
ideal to let you find the time and
realize for yourself what I was saying,
when there laughter could not reach the
depths of us,

I stood there mesmerized not wanting
to control the future only to hold her
later, after she had seen it, carefully
decided what the meaning of this devotion

applause.

They gave you without demeanor and the

clarity was a simple gesture that made
culture and civilizations shaking in the
movement
come to a certain stillness
remaining attuned to the infinite harmony
that exists in nature

then, loving you

was not so easy
as before
when we were
less of ourselves
and more open
to becoming
a part of each other
and I find myself
wondering
what it would feel like
to become a part of you
and all the time not knowing
or wanting
applause

they cried exit

I said there it is at
the door of the bar.
All of the above,
failures
in my anxiety-depression
withdrawing into an eternal
glowing light
receiving you as a main attraction
to the feature

Allah Got Made

sliding towards first base

trying not to remember
the acronyms dancing across
tables of my own trappings
now, perfectly inflected by
this shimmering cool day
of reflection and

I remember how everything
was perfectly completely
quiet like never known an
now more psychotic laughter
from the clown at the table

what perfect mood to do this in,
simply divine dreams of their
own methods working and me

trying to understand it, knowing
how obvious and stupid it was
all becoming to everyone that
the true danger was in the plot.
wow, how easy it is to see the

reflections of their own anger
raging again, fighting, wanting to
show what was left unscene and
then not able to find it.

cylinders of mechanical waste
we were aiming for
in the despaired jungles of sand
saying it's too late to throw down
let's party and a solid three quarter trillion

moslems on their way to Vegas in
stretch limos headed out of the nerve gas
trenches

with wads of Swiss francs and ready to thrill
what's left of Saturday night fever in Roma.

they say arrividerci. they mean it.

everyone looking to prove the
worthlessness of
their religion and become martyrs to Allah for
a down payment on the mortgage and a sears
refrigerator.

VAN GOGH'S BLUES

We wake up on the
same day

a hundred years later.

It's a very long first date.
The kind you hate to miss.
Now I'm up against the chocolate bars
playing symphony fantastique
in my lines going nowhere
walking the dirt walk towards Van Gogh
making my way
back to that concrete road
where I crossed
to the candy store
with the dollar in my hand
running from speeding Limousines
heading for their movie deals
into Kerouac's life screaming for more details
and wondering about Cassady
not wanting to go on without his
funny arrested stolen drunkenness

They say we can work with you
say that's fantastic, we'll take it.

'nt

all the things I never said
all the things I left out
all the things I forgot to include
all the things that left me behind

Remind me of the laughter
you remember the way we
danced in the streets
trying to make our way back
moonlight slowly drifting,

no, it doesn't get any better
than an eight dollar coke
and moving with my one share
into the darkness of a parkway bench
screaming I am a shareholder

and where are my bottles!
and they aren't teasing anymore
and the fighting is getting absurd
almost into darkness I came wanting youth
demanding my youth back,

all the amenities and pleasures afforded
what youthful pleasantries awaited them
while me facing instigation and now see them

"then they get into this....

we love the way the
sunshine through the
diamond ring and
real delicatto

so, you made your \$20
and grabbed your line
you end up in Bahrain
because her daddy is
rich

they say now it's bedtime bedding"
there goes Otis Redding
you have to practice that line in the mirror
and appear as the master of disguise
dirty sexy in the elevator
co-operation from the dirty nasty executives
that's Russia and a new suit for Spain
divide up china for the Mongolians
lulu wants to put me in Jackie o's dress
trying to get me to the crucifixion

Who is Until?

trying to ignore the sounds
of crashing beer bottles and
nails pinned into the plaster of
paris on the wood boards as they
danced through sonnets of
exclusion and principality I
saw the girl in the chair and thought
what would she think being there
what sort of strange moods are these
waiting forever
foolish idiot, they think you are a fool
waiting forever
watching the disappointment of the
mob limousine as you headed for the
chess game and they say funny things
to make them laugh and I wonder not
what it takes to make them cry
but why they want to leave me dying

wondering why their children get ill
from the bad attitudes of love gone bad
and silly stupid things are said that last
all those times in moments I remembered you
and all the elaborate plans failing
in the vision of your eyes I am enclosed
my apologies
to the waiter
holding his fork in the rain.

Very Underwear

What do you want
please, doughnuts immediately
graphic designs are inadequate
to make these.
now take off your clothes
I haven't seen you like this
in awhile
yeah baby
just like that
now turn around
let me look at your
posterior sections
perfect now walk around the bed
let me see your breasts in the air
yeah, show me some energy
open that window
tell them they are all full of shit
slam it
then open it again
and come back to bed
yeah baby
just like that.

then, hearing themes of til eilenspiegel
standing on their empty gallows laughing
they cried what a shame of such illusion
as I groped in the darkness for her hands
looking for that moment when she cried
I don't want to go and knowing it would be

so,

yvonna, yvonne

I want to go on, I need to explain to you now
it was so easy for you to understand me and
I felt bewildered by the way it was so perfect
now aware of the distance behind us I
wondered

when the moments would turn into days and
yvonna, yvonne

I cannot tell you now what it was to be in love
and thinking that the distance would fade and
such a fool I was to deny you the pleasure of
awakening with each other in the warm
afternoons

I was crazy not to give in and what was I
thinking

yvonna, yvonne

I cannot go on without you now and the pain is
spilled

and if you do not find me I may perish in the
logic of this fanaticism and there is nothing
more to say anymore

I love you

yvonna, yvonne.

all the little doggies
rolling around
making fun of each other
now paint.
blue streaks of yellow zip and orange
calamity with green ornations divided
into purple rouge of silhouette and heat
fire lillies of white flowers on her desk
and me worried and that icibana and
who wrote a report for the lubrication
why am i walking away from this knowing
and I should climb through the window

I'm thinking as I look around the backyard
where we threw the ball and I was always
throwing it across the fence and lila would
say we have to wait for the man to come out
in his swimsuit and have his cocktail

and we waited.
and he says oh yeah they sold the place
and you are mistaken and I go home
and I see the pretty asian girl and her little
flowers and I wonder.

call ZEN AND THE WAR IS OFF

Her lips closed in and
I'm leaving because this is war
and I'll tell you all about it later
honey. Along the way, a whole
mountain burning and we should
have more fun next time baby,
maybe go to the horses and they
won't go so crazy. I wonder what

gets into their minds; I know, I know
they call that city planning and the
construction rate went booming.

All these international alliances
and groups devouring each other in
the differences of what is essentially
a perfectly co-ordinated system that
seems to elegantly disassemble from
time to time and reconstructing into
itself in what has become the industrial
revolutions
all these Promethean spills of words and
toxic cold blooded filler from the media
keeping up with us like fondue after the
wedding

and why did the cook charge for sake,

why, why, why.....
Realize Nothing

they say you, negative
staving off starvation
at the bottom line of your great dream
entangled by your own horrifying rack
of meat in the shopping tent and
giddy up cowboy says the slowpoke
to the crafty fun guy who called way
too late from the burger king screaming
about Nazi invasion, a sudden Russian empire
reversal, a flood of transcendental mobsters
crawling up the chimney looking for Santa
Claus trying to pin the JFK thing on him
and now I know it was impossible to ascertain
the emotional responses they elicited so
mathematically
like a perverted logician on his way to
chemistry class
designing new refined ways of shaking the
earth
and I learned long ago about the way the
earth breaks in the morning
listening to Mozart in cafes, afternoons of
slipping downwards, away from the tide of
madness and time for drunken kurdish order
in the misery of this unseen disaster and now
watching the sudden victories appearing so
elegantly on the television

Sand, Yeah

a little game of cucaracha
on the summer
time trail of their
memories now suddenly
cloaked
in these
buildings of some future
construction
unrealized
and seeing beyond the stage of words
lifting more into
creases of jello pudding salvation
the kind that comes with the muffins
tell them we were way beyond
asking
at this time,
blues, miles davis blues
more Charlie parker tunes
encircled flowing beyond
entwined to new destinations and
possibilities, exquisite,
unwandering, I am seeming like it
again, finding Reuben at the

elevator of the wrong building and
suddenly remembering the Save On at
the corner and realizing
what certain fragrant breezes are these

Openly Moving Drama

tell me, you say Camus is a memory to you
I think it's strange the way he gets me too
I found this lately on the bus ride where
well suddenly it just seems like no place
as every part of the past uprooted into
this new day, I am wandering through this
ancient military disaster looking through
piles of wreckage, when they ask, folding
chairs into trucks on some journey to
awakening.
the world is like a doll to me, smiling in the
window
overtaking history with her little shoes
what situations are these, tailored like some
foolish plastic dream of disorder and tantrums
I stood cold staring at the chaos drilling out
my
lines, finding them like, twist only, or push to
open

At the Los Angeles Tar Pits

Sabertooth Tiger Bones All Over The Place
Yes it is true I have spent many
hours
looking into the blades of grass
alone at the waters of this place remembering
a million years ago when the biggest and best
would find their bird and jump in too deep
and disappear forever, imagining primordial
screams
far deeper than my own and lucky only not for
this moment
to be sinking in this tar and seeing the light
reflect
off the beautiful thick blackness of it all
I realized it must have taken days to die here
slow, falling into it, thinking all the time
there must be a way out and these years
sinking into it I saw a man on the bus
with a walker and I sat under a tree and
thought when I am old like that I would not
want to be alone and what sort of stamina

does it take to be alive like that tree at the tar
pits
bent and fragile, talking like the wind

Bus Journey

wake up
and other indescribable things
blaming myself for
the millionth time
all those things
I never decided on
those things to do
the alley becoming an alligator
the ladies on the bus suddenly
screaming new politics in Russian
at the back of the bus, all of them
in some secret journey to the market
to dance with each other

Meet The Criteria

So here you are again
arguing the future with dead Chinaski
trying to make sense of his drinking
and what should
you
care
if he wrote
sentences
more beautiful
now it is hard to feel ugly
in the sunlight
as you laugh
and remember

he was poor
all the way until the end
then he lectured at big Universities
and drove a black BMW
all the beats said he sold out
and that
to you
was poetry.

The Mad Gone Ones

that line of people
standing there screaming
what have you done to our computers!
you would not believe
how many assholes
are in that line.

Still Friends

You laugh
I could take a photograph
You never know
it maybe worth while
just to see you going in style
and wait...
is that all you think you get
well you haven't seen nothing yet
I said love could be worth trying
you say it isn't how you live
it's how your dying
well you, you don't have to explain
I know how you got caught in the rain
and when they say you've had enough

you can say yeah, plenty
while you tap dance for Manny.
just remember keep pushing
when you run out of gas.
and don't forget to laugh
don't forget to cry
the way it hurts inside
The Final Joke

You were simply out of control
they will say for the last laugh
leaving you there behind, stopping
in the silence I laughed for youth
and learned these great things, disguise
what deception?

Now there at the middle of the fall
lost in the event of the fashionable
thinking maybe I should wait for autumn
before seeing the sun at the Hotel d' cap.
I bring you flowers in the rain because they
say I will be washed away in it and there are
no answers here, priced out at the company
store. I was refusing to see myself again, for
what it was I remember now these debts as
they piled and turning into shadows I
wandered not unable to distinguish the flowers
from the grass and now whittled watching
Christ on the line not able to split the wood
and them coming with thorny crowns

The Puppet Show

In another three days
I'll be thirty eight years old
and it's afternoon here.
The sun is out and I am waiting on a bench
near the grass and there is a red velvet curtain
for the puppet show.

All the children are screaming and I move
closer in too watch this thing.
It's worse than anything Bukowski now,
not a single penny in my pocket for this opera
and my stomach growling, well enjoy

the puppet show, here comes the first one
and he is a little bird and here comes the
second one,
a sad faced little boy who blows up a balloon
and the yellow ball breaks and some of the
children
start to cry and a pair of skeletons start to
dance
and one boy can't watch it so his mother yells
if you don't want to watch close your eyes
and I laugh a little,
my stomach growls some more
now the suffering feels endless, unbelievable
to me like we were denied the right to live
based on a filed traffic ticket or a two page
book report and my world is dying into itself
for no reason other than the clock is wound
and there is no money for the bus, no money
for lunch no money for nothing and that's the
way it's been for years now, everyone greatly
excited by the idea
of mass extinction and global race war
I like this puppet, yeah, dance, dance,
dance.

One Of These Days

Benny says what do you know
you are unemployed
I say what does it matter
I'll be dead soon
and sometimes I feel it coming on
like when I'm walking the dog
on the grass and he stops to piss
and I think I could just lie

down right there in it
and never get up and
what's the use.

Part of me feels like the clock
is winding down completely
and getting up isn't exactly
a barrel of laughs and tired,
tired of the bus stop waiting and
feeling like a failure and then
I see a Palm tree swaying in the wind
and I think, yes, poet, leave them
with that.

A Few Guys Were Lower than Lorca

Not Buying It, Selling it.

Lorca, now I know how they come
in the broken sorrow of this moment
I adore you and there is nothing
between us except language and I
I realize now how enraged they become

by the wisdom you possess in the beauty
of your reality unfolding, here I am now
my feet dangling over your peer facing their
logical machine guns down with my own
sarcastic wit beyond them and putrefied
they must have felt alone, wronged, indecent
as I suspected I would love again and she
could come out of a gas station at this point
and be nobody and I'd say do you know Lorca
and maybe she'd say no, never heard of him
and I'd say perfect.

We'd get into her car and I'd say I'm not a rich
guy and I don't have any underwear left

did you know that part and she'd say yeah I
heard it on the radio

and I suppose I could fall in love with anybody
now

and the bounds limitless and wide I felt
suddenly

free in the bullshit like man this ain't great
expectations

this is worldwide global mind control and I
was just

dumb enough to de-program it with an even
harder line of stupidity and Lorca I am sorry I
was not there on the day they dragged you
into the streets in the afternoon for your
poetry because I would have given them words
they could never forget.

A Poor Try

They leave you the listerine
at the bedside and a note that
says have a nice day or

get out, depending how they feel,
 making you want to sell the
record player on Tuesdays
in the midst of rain,
it rained all night, we
made love in a small room,
the next day, they turned
off the power and she
went to her sisters and
the furniture man came and
took everything back and
I sat in the empty room and
thought what a perfect time
for candles.

I walked around the boulevard
and the police seemed to be laughing
at me like, boy am I an idiot,
letting that one go,
 I tried to go back to school
 and concentrate.

Thinking back on it now, laughing
 how could I possibly do the math?
what a pair of legs.

vanishing in some unique
destination
lost to the soul
that remembers

nothing
of words

I believe you
when the
phone rings and
you laugh
let me say
what it was
in the way
I don't know
these conditions

make what they want of us
and we enjoined
towards a certain place
just trying to sleep somewhere
and getting together to become alone
was the most interesting part.

Blasphemy and the Fornicators

Welcome to Hollywood,
everything is neatly arranged

everything carefully laid out
to detail the configuration
of whatever history they have
decided on for the day.
The fluid mystery of the stage
disappearing in the nonsense
of Christianity, as these power
mongers deliberate and sensationalize
their fleeting rationality

also now I find myself wondering
what will become
of my honesty
in this profession
subject to the blasphemy of fornicators
determined to set
their own record straight
and gauge the public
for more money
I wondered
what would become
of my diligent work
as I remained in the background
they put me in front
of these heaping insults
and I wondered
what would become
of my decency.

All they want is attention
and more cash for a system
then there is a silence
and someone waits longer
for another answer
and someone arrives with potato chips
and says here is lunch

enjoy it.

Events of Virgo

It begins with a phone call to the
wife of an old English lord and ensuing
disaster as ranks file in to desert them. It
begins with a search for the right notes to say
on a winter day because we don't want to
forget the men who moralized philosophy
into the exchange of human lifestyles that
became tartar in the sauce of order]
now say something
to a government talking about power
trying to correct what once existed
of culture and delude a public awareness

towards a display of their individual
achievements.

Haiku

The presence of this moonlight

makes me believe love
is a part of all these things

if there is silences in life
let them exist now
behind the kiss in memory

soon the darkness will fall
into the flow of tears
making a way there

I know when I see her then
she will be cutting flowers
alive in the dance of light

autumn and the wind
dying into a light breeze
now the sky is dark

Hot seasons dying
I go swimming in the sea
and watch the birds laugh

blankets in the cold
still I always thought of you
as a good father

the rain not yet here

I thought of the one moment
you were waiting for

sounds of old feeling
their way reaching into you
rising to surface

season becomes fall
all the colors start to change
I am still in love

moon in black sky
silence in these deep moments
waiting for morning

I feel the whole sky
with one single breathe
just saying goodbye

rain yet to arrive
wet on the old scenery
making it seem new

sky twisting the heat
in memory of love
I saw you dreaming

autumn nearly here
soon leaves colored orange
will fall from the tree

solitude of dream
swaying palm trees and ocean
make life mystical

the presence of this moonlight
makes me believe love
is a part of all these things

if there is silence
let exist now for what endless
kiss in memory

Movie Helicopters Next

All these metaphors
of what is right and wrong
and what we are and aren't
allowed?

the most important thing
is that
we are in love

and all of the mistake
in between these ideas
become acknowledged before
time
and the medieval accounts of lore
are determined later by
revisionists completing knowledge
from stalemates

Los Angeles Fashion Network

You can look pretty too, with the Clairol 17

and the phosphorescent jello in your mouth
digesting Shakespeare like there was some
great betrayal to Marlowe, not really able
to understand where she was now, too far
away from me and the earth saying hello
while I am awakened finally to the plausible
and shadowed by suspicious fluidic tide
pausing and rewinding me like some
unfunctioned
clock and the time fortunate to be alive
speaking
conversations of postal workers wondering
where the mail went after they buried your
father
and so what if the weave of their hair is
unconcerned by your torment or leading you
to anguish and nowhere and the stain of their
pressure pumping down on us like tomorrow
could not breathe and the sky would
disappear into some fading oblivion without a
milky way land, now I know why Columbus
left to find you, someplace different from the
mainstream, another place to be in love
without the King of some country wondering
where the jewelry went and remember, that
was love, Marco tells me rolling over for
another Schlitz Malt liquor and bugler, wow
I never bought that stuff I tell him, yeah, it's
cheap he says.

Now feel the rhythm

climbing up your line
like the clothes
missing in their drawers
I draw you
like the billboards with
their signs of broken tears
and my father's old suits
I think it's time they took
the ice cream from your hands
and say it's not all good
it's nothing is too good for you
and glow in the starlight dancing
I freak into the disco ball as they
correspond about the touch of my hand
across her dress, things they don't
understand and I'm supposed to feel
strange she has me coming on the floor
and I'm not remembering ever hearing
her name and my idea of fun is moral crisis
for their eager eyes waiting.

Pros

this time
we could play like
forever is tomorrow
and never arriving
or I could run not
wanting to understand
why I feel this way
feeling unavailed by
these sentiments of
meek disasters painted
like a mirror of lives
once between us, now
this time
I could say blessed
is the earth
there was no grounds
for protest or complaint
except common lies

Poetry In Motion

 You are, poetry in motion, kid
 like the flowers in the rain
 dangling for their lives
 blending with the mud
become a part of it,
make yourself feel
 the way a dandelion can
when the sun is out
make sure you are certain
 of the road you are on
 or don't take it....
you are poetry in motion kid,
because the wonderful part
of life is that when you realize
that you are going the wrong way
you can turn around and get there.

youth
like calm
breaking through
giant doors
more pleads
of darkness
between light
and sleep
it feels
like tomorrow
would be a difference.
memories of the big car
in the parking lot
and the Welch moon
dreaming of his cigar
for the holy bible
and a Florida beach condo
he says guns all day and I
play guitar and like it that way
sure, sure, cheap talk
from the big radio room
I knew the man who used to sell
the bands, they called it
frequency
and filed them all away

REVOLTING - blue gauche on canvas

Slowly now, I turn to see you Henry
there at the pond in your white suit and
white hat and burning Einstein's pages
I thought of priests and karaoke music
as the north Koreans ordered nuclear weapons
and thoughts of old Bill in his suspenders
walking around the mall with his pickpockets
and art thieves in place and say I love you Joan
and everything seems so complicated the way
it always was for me and beached like a whale
in Bruehl's beauty, memories of candlelight
and
that guy at Pico who turned me on to
cucaracha
and I wish I had never heard that song and
Henry says learn to play flamingo
I say WHAT?
He says flamingo, it's Mexican it comes from
pulling on the strings it has nothing to do with
the blowtorches.

A Folk Singer

After I quit school to play music
my father took me to a deli
and wanted to know what
I was going to do with my life
and I told him maybe I'd be a
great folk singer.

He said there aren't any great folk singers
there's just a few guys who travel all the time
playing in crowded smoky clubs
to crowds that never appreciate them enough
I ordered the scrambled eggs and
he was really worried.

you just sit down there
in your wireless shoes
tell me how it goes
tell me the one about

the heretofore and who is listening?
we see you dreaming there, your
listless minds falling like the weekend
coming early and hark who goes there,
more dread and torment followed by
profuse sweating and I am tuning up the
computer to record the decibel levels
of the wood saw across the street.

you come into the room
he tells you not to shout
you whisper hey I love you
what's this all about?

he says voting polls and Cuban wars
this aint it I'm stuck in mud,
it's just I said too much
a nasty old Disney cartoon
you think it's just a game
the way they run the bout
but all of the shouting's over,

into a world going nowhere.

What golden sorrows are mine
born into these fragile emotions
verily, verily we advance into them
please said the night to the morning
let me come into you.
I followed my heart into these dreams...
if they ask for knowledge
of what I discovered,
tell them I received pleasure
from wind blowing through leaves
watching them move in their ways
I was accused of being guilty
for seeing them fall
as I walked from sidewalks
and cafes
they offered me pills instead of food
and I learned what it was to eat words
I searched for them everywhere
and they made my love complete

I awakened each morning into greater
and greater tragedy
I learned to laugh at myself
at times
it was all I had.
What golden sorrows are mine?

These Words

when I am with you
time will be still
and the beauty
of words, these words
will find you
when I am with you
these days of some
other past will reach
a future I cannot see
my aging love
for these times
will become suddenly
ageless and without
end
my eyes will no longer see
and yours, beyond me
will look back and forward
through sky and trees
oceans and earth
these words, you will learn
to think beyond them.

They Must Have Ordered Lunch Without Me

third Christmas in a row
without money to buy gifts,
those feelings of failure
piling up like snow
on the mistletoe,

third season complete in my mistakes
waiting for discussions to end,
years they come and go
they can replay the film
while I search my pockets for change
they talk of love
and what it means
all this beautiful Christmas spirit
unaffordable to me
I have such wonderful memories
of incredible holidays
filled with joy and laughter
they are very distant now
like a boat sailing away
to another place
I wave to my love
from across the oceans
they keep us captive
to their morality
I wrote these words
to let you know
even without the gift wrapping
I love you.

they say hushhhh
everything came with such a rush
all the emotions of a blush
you speak to me
tell me about all the things you miss
talk about your daddy and one more kiss
I realize
time is not the essence just a prize
soul is something greater
then foolish pride
did you think about
all the silly words that got in the way
what the world might have been with one o.k?
they say hushhhh
everything came with such a rush
all the emotions of a blush

The Good Age and Sea

Like the wind flapping against the water
leaving you breathless, hoping for another day
say time has no moment for me and that is
good,
the way it should be, doors closing behind you
in
the rush of tragic human events undoing you
and
these motionless patterns of thought
transcending
now, what you have been, what you have
become,
these blues bargaining you beyond the
windows of
your own imagination towards a closer place
of
fear, winding you up, like silly string at the
parade
as they walk by laughing and you have to love
the
riots and marketplace crowding with
strangers, here

The Feeling Is Poetry

Winter coming on and the streets wet with
rain,
thoughts of
what if I am failing
this game of life?
wondering around the downstairs kitchen
looking for the ice cream
I delight in the idea that my words
live beyond me
and the feeling is truly
poetry
thoughts of what will I do
in the morning
after the rain is gone
and the afternoons empty,
without money, without work,
there is the meager sentiment of reality

closing me in, blurring my distinctions

torn into the emptiness, crawling through it
like a baby on the floor
making my way
towards the living room door
I resigned myself to defeat
and remained calm
although
nothing remained but the words.

The Curve Balls

I remember the first year of little league
I wanted to be a great pitcher
maybe another Sandy Koufax
and I tried out for the position
and threw a couple of curve balls that
didn't quite make it across the plate
so they put me in right field
where nobody ever seemed to hit
and I waited out there all season
sort of wondering what I was doing there
and in that second to last game
somebody hit a hard one into center field
and the outfielder just missed it
got blood all over his uniform,
when it caught him in the face
and I was glad to be playing right field

the corridors and filled with men
who watch television in the afternoons
and go outside to smoke cigarettes.
there is a corner store

where I go at night
to eat fried chicken
and sometimes it's pork chops
that just looks like fried chicken
and I buy a couple of sodas
and some of the men ask me
if I fought in the war, if I'm a
veteran and I laugh and tell them
that if I was a veteran it would mean
the war is over and it isn't
and I'm still fighting and I take
a shower and go to sleep
and they don't say much else.

Stay Love

I was instructed too much
and one day the sky divided
into new worlds
created
from the imagination
of my own unlimited
dreams I made my way through
the emptiness
of these unfound pages
whispering
songs of life
to early morning
waiting
for evening to die
I slept alone
in cold rooms
reading the history
of broken records

my mind danced
to fragrant afternoons
and twilight
searched the rooms
without me.

you forgot to grow

they tell you in the welfare line,
you forgot to clock in
or punch out or check the machine
you didn't get the approval
you forgot the stamps, yeah, the stamps
you walk away hungry
it's immobility it's loss of everything
it's not caring anymore
it's not feeling anything
except
the words

they rattle against the spilled bottles at night
while they are howling at the moon
and the train rattling on at the station
that old steamy railroad headed for the loch
ness
on their way to oblivion looking for some
unfound monster scraping her back against
you
from underneath the world and you toss
the looking glass while caught glimpsing in the
rain
it was there she caught you

We don't have enough religion

to make our own gas

try to find the freeway
before they make you pay for the fast
we can't get along
the feeling's just too strong
we might be right or wrong
I can't deal with this
small town situation when
the rapist in your head,
carried a refrigerator
full of powdered led
the guy with the rake
he came to steal your fake
show your good loneliness
you wanted to shout back
at night a good fright movie
to make him enjoy suspense
Hitchcock was special
the army probably pays his rent
for this credit card girl
I would pawn the world
but that would just
make her dizzy
and we couldn't get any sleep
I'm singing piece d'resistance
she's thinking c'est la vie
I can't win the argument
it's just a part of the scene
she has to tell you something
and I won't know what to say
when the garden hose comes on right there
I'll understand the way

Raise

you follow a popular agenda
in social revolutions
that happen an hour a day
your world is spinning backwards
when you come to see the fray
it's a real world situation
where the players like to play
and political solutions between us all the way
you could maybe have a cocktail
and double the order while you stay
there's simply too much exaggeration
when they get the best of you
it's like come and tote these fast words
for our new living crew

we based our minds on politics
and put it too them straight
while the fairies danced for jiggles
in the private upstairs rooms
these keys just prove the rat race
has an ending and a groove
so can I grab them and make my move
into a radio tune
a song that never leaves the moon

One of those special days,
the kind I never thought I'd have to see,
one of those days when there's not
even a dollar in your pocket anymore
and it's so bad,, it's like you aren't allowed
to carry money, it may buy food or something
that could keep you alive and the blues
comes along and says do you know where
you are going and you are almost upset
now saying I thought you would tell me
and the blues is no stranger anymore
or any unwelcome friend, the blues is
a permanent fixture now, like a broken lamp
or a table saw and you cannot exchange the
blues
at the market for potato chips or turn them in
for extra cuts of prime rib, the blues they just
remain
and remind you of all the failure in the world

One World Away From Tomorrow

The afternoon spent dreaming
almost ahead of myself again,
thinking my life is a cold place now
even in this summer heat,
in this drastic nonsense of creation
I am afraid to whisper

and scare the hummingbird
from a place above the trees
and the torn pages of my poems
folded into their silent space in drawers

what breathtaking desire it is
to seek words in the motionless air
trying to explain the wind
breakfast was cereal and coffee

that's all I know
I wondered if I would ever love again
and the scenes changed as I paced around
inside, outside all the same
searching for words

words to be a poet.

Lovers

tomorrow,
filled
with pain,
and the next day
filled up
with even more
I will look at myself
and wonder
where I am
standing in this drenching
pouring rain,
I will see the drops of dew
not as rivulets of water

but the tears of god
crying for more beauty
in what remains of the
earth,
we are destined to follow our hearts I think
and so many are led away by presentations
I was seeing my way through moods of
torment and rage
I was following my love for the trees
you could say
and the way they would bend and sway
through the winds of the day

it was not for you to know me,
I was only a stranger to myself,
what I came to learn of words is that
you must really love them, give them a lot of
love
to make them dance and alive on the page
words are like gentle creatures raging through
the night
they find their way to everyone and words are
like
laughing friends or cowering enemies
depending on

their hold or slight, they can trick and
deceive,
allure or despair, depending on their bent or
snare,
I see hollowed out souls in the afternoon
they give me hellos and they ask me friendly
questions they already know the answers for,
I was destined to do unusual things,
bringing these words into being,
I was destined to sing the praises of afternoon
light
and reason fell victim to insight,

My broken tears
they come from thinking of the days
life was good
and Willy Mays was still playing.
Virtual machinery
had not yet arrived
to explain to us

the situation.
realizing that I was not a stranger to myself
I simply waited in the time lingering
on like the music of a Garbo movie
and realizing the infinite new born day
there came several instances
where I was captured and revealed
into a limitless sorrow and
pristine can describe the séance
of people moving along without me
in the deserted nights of
this scene.

undermined in my determination to exist
I wandered through ignorance
towards some branded featureless landscape
of contaminated evidence

The Night Has A Funny Way Of Making You
See Less

The darkness,
my friend,
is no stranger to the solitude.

begin again
says the sun to the morning
begin again
from where I left off
there was no beginning

there was only
drama.

You lift up your glass
and remember
something.

Just Not Done Loving You

You fall out
and wake up
you're over it, yet
you find out
the future

is all that you get
eyes that keep closing
maybe soon opening then,
you're backwards
and losing
the moment you try to regret
it's something
you learn of
and maybe soon
think you forget
it's climbing
and reaching,
touching, a feeling
just not done loving you yet.

I will glow now,
I will dance upon this page,
these words will be my music,
they will sing
of ages and tell stories of time,
I will try somehow to find the meaning
of my life and search the world for

my own answers
sometimes I will not find them
some things are left in mystery
that is the magic of the unknown
I will laugh and I will cry
I will live and I will die
I will rest and I will awaken
there will be moments of silence
and others,

I kiss your lips

you know
they taste like wine
love is such a stranger
dear laughter

I smell the roses
they are red and yellow
the air filled with fear
I am far away love
wishing you near.
If I could taste your lips
sweeter than wine

my destroyed life
could seem divine
what I needed were opportunities
instead there was a rug
pulled out from under me
the wool, they put it over your eyes
they are so clever, coming disguised
remember it's a free country
when they come to check up on you

Song for Hank Williams

the mystery of life unfolds

as we age,
getting older
is no saving grace,
we learn to accept ourselves
in all our
incandescent
rage,
what a pity it is to
feel beautiful
and die
in the back seat of
a car
on the way to the hospital
choking on liquor
and remembering
love

no more sentiments of lovers and strangers
beckoning the night forward
no more wars fought in unfamiliar places
for lost causes and with high hopes
no more gas lines caused by disaster

neighbors screaming at each other
in the bleak memory of daylight
no more treachery from government
hell bent on sending our youth into the fray
no more waiting around for love to call
at the beginning of a new day
no more standing around
listening to tyrants and dictators
telling us who we are and what they expect
from us
no more distance between us
in the elegiac laughter of circumstance
frolicking
on Mozart and sucking candy canes till
our faces turn red
I came to destroy fantasy of how the world
should work and offer my solace to the
readership, trying to understand where the
day went in the sunlight of tomorrow
rests a new hope
that mankind will be forever renewed

perfect resonance of interaction
between
human beings

exists
between streetlights
and in
shopping malls,
sharing doorways
and growing old together
clutching each other
in the sunset
of a breathtaking
tomorrow,
we released ourselves from bondage
and relinquished our souls
to each other
in the twilight of new days
beginning again
there was no actual distance between
us, only small ideas
by great thinkers
trying to weld their way
into the mindset
of the general public.
We dated ourselves and
looked for ways to reach bliss.
Babylon Blues

you continue to
just lie there
and dream

or something
lay
le
losing you
was so easy
when faced
with the truth
of how
perfect it is
alone

when seeking perfection
I have learned never
to underestimate
my own self destructive
tendency to fail
at critical times
and I leave work realizing
I am fighting
the devil.

blurry eyed and bewildered
you stumble through the words
of Baudelaire and into the bleak

hours of night reminded of Shakespeare
and his commitment to the theater
you raged about the complexity of
these myths burning their edges
beside you like some metal wheel
sparking in the afternoon as you
walk through the dewy grass and
remember the beloved times when
the daffodils sang louder than they do now
and the opera sounding like a wheel of
homeless junk and bottles before the
truck passes and cars whizzing by with air
going anywhere, I need to understand what
I know of destiny is only sweet refrain and
the sounds of the police sirens screaming
towards unique destinations as the wines
come up beyond the bus stations,
forgetting what I know of gloom I
let myself down with Dos Passos and his
first scenes with cognac and cigars and
on his way home aboard some French
luxury liner, what a time it must have been,
a time to remember heroes,

Godot Isn't Coming

Tell yourself it will be alright and wait for
him
sometimes in dream a face appears
the image of your father
laughing at you and when you awaken
there will be the silence of the room
surrounding you like the timelessness.
So many times I have walked these streets
looking for reasons to forgive myself
for these last few years of waiting.

I have wandered across seas of knowledge and
understanding

trying to grasp the fundamental truth
that is after all divine
what I know of the self is that
the eternal holy one
cannot be found

and no thoughts can apprehend you.

If you want to I want to

I tell her
after she asks me if I would jump off a cliff
if someone told me to.

very funny, she says
taking off her clothes
no, funny is something else
let me show you funny

I say, taking off mine.

I'm afraid of myself

it's a criminal behind all those good looks
it says
trust me
that face of a thousand smiles
it says
this is the way it is
when it isn't

and everybody knows
the story differently
so I try not to speak to strangers anymore
they say the strangest things.

I said love is a two way mirror in a fun house
and she walked away for some surfer in ray
bans
going the other way,

I thought of saying hold on a minute
and then realized I wasn't worth it

the subtle ones
chew gumdrops and let it slide
they say
she was a good ride

I love the look of sex in the afternoon
with the bed sheets sprinkled with wet kisses
and salty tears
from somebody leaving somebody else

I get two fisted about handcuffs
and tell her to let it go
she says don't you want to try

I say that's not my style
why don't you let you go

she walks out, stumbling over Mozart albums.

I'd like to sing a lullaby
but I'm a bad crooner
so I'll look at my yellow teeth in the mirror
and smile

think of the times I was a teenager
and they were all pearly white

the days eat you up, stranger
take it from me

I'm not your father
just somebody who doesn't care.

Those blank stares
from homeless faces
they say
"I was once the chairman of the bank of
America
do you have a quarter for a cup of coffee"

I said if I did
I wouldn't be a true poet

they laugh
and it makes me feel good
making someone miserable, laugh

I think to myself
maybe that really was the chairman.

I'm no dreamboat honey
I have scar tissue down to my ankles
they wrap around my knees
and work their way down to the floor

she smiles figuratively
and I try to remember Lord Byron
or someone beautiful
but forget everything
in her smile.

I get nervous
try not to make a big deal
out of feeling
like peeing in my pants

there's something I can't resist
and I walk away
to the bar.

You go your way I'll go mine
I say to her
before she opens the door
as if
she hadn't thought of that already

I tell myself
it isn't the Charlie Parker blues
it's something warmer
maybe Miles Davis
sketches in Spain

the feeling of the rain
on the roof
relaxes me

and I forget everything,
everything.

my emotions get a hold of me
I grab the windowsill and think
I'm a dwarf
next to the New York skyline
even if this is Florida

what I tell you
is between us
me, you and the rest of the world

so don't let it go
because the feeling
only comes once in a lifetime

and this could be the one
strangest moment
you are
for the first time
feeling.

you are right
let's call the whole thing off, Fred Astaire
the top hat, the dancing shoes
everybody's smashing windows
and dusting off the broken glass
from their pants.

why go on about the simple pleasures of life
to ten million unemployed people
wondering where their next meal is coming
from

when I can get in line and join them
for rice and beans at the soup kitchen.

what a special day
I got my teeth done
and fed my parakeet
I told myself
a thousand lies
and in the end
I was still a medical patient
waiting in the observatory
for time to run out.

I tell myself this is not the end of the huge joke
it gets infinitely worse
and I know that, I mean really know it
the way Einstein knew relativity

time is infinite
and we are mortal.

I'm chilling out
remembering those cries
of holy god
before orgasm
it was good with her
I don't remember her name
but she was a simple girl
who took me to bed
with a six pack of Budweiser
and a pack of cigarettes
in a motel room in the valley
I don't even know her name.

let me think about this
I told myself
it was only time running out
what is the laughter for?

I was remembering the pussyfooting
publishers
who dismissed this over lunch
maybe it was the thickness
of the fondue

I don't know
it's all just a blur to me now
the whole day spent dreaming
of somebody
I never met

flying through the air
in a dream
we left the crowd

and I was not distressed
when we landed
from the clouds.

you play it off
talking to yourself in the car
telling you not to give up on you
what it means
to be a poet
in a world of dreamers
is really something.

there must be a reason
but I suppose,
those are for scientists
poets don't need a reason
just a newspaper upside down
in a garbage can to find a word or two

trying to create an original sentence
is an act of god.

say perchance, the wind is immortal
taking with it all earthly things
for which we are unsure of
I behold the plasma of ocean's realm
revealing unseen voids through time
I am certain now of love
and it's concealing in the dream of epic rhyme
for which we are sure
I circle the enjoyment of pleasurable
circumstances
with which we meet our gaze
only to be spoken for
by something so amazed.

the tidal fury of patriots
exposed to utter lies
the plentiful of multitude
by which the skies do hide

are clouds that mist the trees for us
with Satan's lurid pride
of knowledge and the thing that is
of which we hold inside.

waves caress the full bliss of winter here
I spark another thought into the page
and begin again to write the fragile hours
away
while others pace the hallways of the asylum

we are close to each other here
all of us patients
unable to look beyond the doors
of where we stand

the walls close in on you
you dream of other times
when the world belonged to you

each of us wondering what it was like
before we arrived here

all those subtle dreamers
whispering the blues
in candy stripers outfits
making me wonder
where the chocolate is

I can't always eat sweets
it's no good for me

I get nervous
and don't know what to say
as they pass by

they are always so friendly
all smiles
passing by with licorice and hellos

all those undecided people
staking their lives
on other people's miseries
looking around
for a bowl of fruit
amidst a riot
of undetermined sorrow

I grieve for them
and lend a hand when I can
but it gets more difficult
to tell who they are

they walk around in cheap suits
without laundry money
looking for work to mow the lawn
or something

I have to forgive myself
for wanting to write words
and telling myself
that is enough.

weeping soldiers mothers
as the President cries war
there is so much evil in the world
it isn't difficult to tell where it is
at that point.

I sometimes wish I was someone else
instead of one of those cold callous people
who just expect the morning paper and a cup
of coffee
and don't want to fight about it.

but that gets me in trouble upstairs
they'll say it's a lack of patriotism
for not wanting my tax dollars
to go to machine guns
I have to hold my breadth
and laugh
wonder why they aren't going themselves
to report back
about the finest disaster.

I got to give myself a good kick in the ass
sometimes
just to get out of bed

I walk around the kitchen triumphantly
eating a pastry

there are a million starving people in India
and I'm eating a pastry

what a lucky guy I am
I should hold it up and take a picture
of my victory
before I eat it.

the pivotal scene of the drama
the actress crying
trying not to come to terms
with her infidelity

I tell myself
it's not a very good movie
I'd rather have a sumptuous feast
then be subjected to this

but she keeps on crying
and the music keeps up to the crescendo
where a thousand violins cry
what have you done.

I try not to get involved with all the drama
it sends me off in a million directions
when I'd rather be alone with myself
and a good book detailing adventures

what can I do to convince myself
the hours in the day
only go by so fast.

It's a real challenge
trying to make the good times last.

this poem really doesn't say anything
because it is a mockery
of the wasted hours

I cannot have back.

I wish I was the pizza delivery boy
showing up for tips
he has a good job
everyone is always happy to see him.

Not like the coroner or a mortician
or something like that.

When that slice of pizza arrives
there is always a smile
and people forget all about the fact
that we are mortal
and going to die.

It's just a slice of pizza
but it makes you forget everything.

you can't always tell the good ones from the
bad

I tell her as she straps on her shoes

I don't know which one I am

I say confidently before she leaves

who am I to think I can tell the difference

what if I am neutral on the subject

I'm still one or the other

in the end

it's hard for me to tell

she says

as the door closes

and she is gone.

the laughter of the children playing
kites on the beach in a strong wind
the sound of the barking sea lions
on the rocks near the shore

the memories of youth they spare us
from feeling old, we sway with them
as our hearts beat against the air
like those kites in the wind.

remember those tricycle days
of grandma's cookies
and minutes left before they are ready
you feel like you can't wait
there's nothing you want more
your waltzing around the kitchen.

waiting...

the security guard
waits at his post
as the package comes

the ignition waits for
the delivery boy
who returns

another day in America
in the small corners
of the world
where everyone is
waiting.

I get antsy sometimes
trying to figure things out
I have no business knowing
in the first place.

insecurity chooses me an opera seat
and exposes myself to the audience
waiting
for the next break at intermission
to go to the bathroom.

it's the blues again

it's the blues again
answer the door
another phone bill
another consequence
of something that must be paid
immediately

the bill collectors exchange
your phone number
and know you well
they call from all over the world
wondering where your money is

it's like an octopus trying to get
to your throat
the bill collectors

someone always calls late at night.

it's the blues again. wake up. answer it.

remember those days

people, fall in love
remember spring
all the joys that love can bring

remember the tulips on Park avenue
the white limousine spinning around the turn
it was so beautiful
the tulips on Park Avenue.

the first breadth of life
in New York
on a spring morning
remember those days

Florida Winter Rains

Might as well be in the bathtub in these
monsoon days of laughter and rain
the slowness everywhere
devouring my moods in gentility
nothing to do, the silence everywhere

the business was a part of my life
now it is a part of my past, the Latin music
plays
the Irish eyes smiling, the black men across
the street exchanging waves, everywhere
America is born into a new moment,

a new sacred trust between nature and man
compelling each to respect the dust, what lies
between our competing
souls. We whisper loudly and God hears us.

The Verse of Clowns

In Washington, they write bills
that we cannot afford
and call it health care.

I wait for the resume to hit the desk
of someone who feels friendly enough
to pick up the phone, there are so many of us
now
unemployed, waiting out our lives, feeling
drowned
in those clown tears, soaking through our
sheets, our chairs
everything we are, everywhere we go, the
hearts of crying violins mending our ways,
what a frozen summer drifted by.

I'm Not Done Yet

Says the sun to the sky,
crying the tears of the sky

what we know of ourselves
is but a daydream
in time removed
from ourselves

the lapse of silence unfolding
the complacent ones more silent
if there could be more of that
but we are confused and talk
of faith and love that needs no words
and I am tired of telling myself
it gets better
when I don't know what it is
that I am speaking of.

Life is funny that way, it is never over.
Even after we are gone.

the Temperature rising

the fifth horse race didn't go so well
and you collected the old tickets from the
other ones
and through them out together.

the winners stick with you your whole life
those fast breaking ponies coming out of the
last turn
with your best horse vying for the finish line
and when they come in it is a certain
exhilaration.

when they lose, you just find the temperature
rising.
the temperature rising.

I'm acting silly again, wondering what to put
down
in the sixth race.

the meager years behind us

we believe again
as the season change
that life is renewed

in the simple changes

that are made
in these seasons

I go alive finally
to the last place
I remember
in my memory

season of time
season of memory
season of nuance
of specials, of leftovers, of scares
season of romance
of dead love, of love gone of love nowhere
of withheld states of frames of mind
of never letting go of good times
seasons of despair, relentless spotless tides
that seem to carry you along nowhere

seasons of remorse, guilt, shame
riding the waves in, not getting home,
not ever getting home

thoughts of Vergil, of prose, of poetry of
strangers
of love, of what it could be like for you to
remember
more about life than what it was you put aside.

of all the dead end jobs
I ever worked,
none beats typing

I was good at it
from my poetry
clinking at the keys all the time
rhyming and reason
being very much the same thing to me

I took to the frolic room for beer
on Hollywood Blvd. and forgot myself
what it was back in those backyard days
with the barbecue cooking and the friends
waiting at the grill for more hamburgers

I told myself not to put aside
the memories of these strange things
I remember about love

of all the dead end jobs in the world
'nothin beats love.

I tell myself
not to forget the strangers
who came into my life
with drama and tears
they were the weird wonderful ones
who thought despair
was Shakespeare
and the wonderful life of Jimmy Stewart
was not so far away for some

I thought of you in some regret
and told myself the winter would be a dream
with you
I told myself it was a different time
then the ones before
and maybe there would be some of this
I would actually want to remember

but it was hard to think of good things
and much of my good life was gone

I was shaken as a soul awaiting trial and Kafka
made me laugh, staring down at my shoes

staring down at my shoes.

love is

the biggest lie ever told
they destroy everything in your life
and it is also the biggest truth.

and politics is
outrageous.

the food lines

I remember the soup lines in Berkeley
and the homeless people waiting for meals
between school terms. I tread into the rooms
looking for what was the truth to me

those unspoiled eyes wandering around the
room
and I speak to myself in dances sometimes
and wonder of you. I tell myself the mystery
of time is something you may one day enjoy
seeing

that maybe the words would make you laugh
and dance and forget everything, everything
that happened

that I would hypnotize you with the poem and
you
could become a stranger even to yourself and
think

only of the laughter of the moment you
understand.
what a wonderful day that would be.

if time has no promises

then the future is my dream
to console in her affair with time
the relationship of the clock to the wall
like two close strangers getting to know one
another

I think to myself, I wonder if they really know
each other or does this clock just tick against

it all day long without ever hearing a peep out
of it

and sometimes the walls creek and maybe I
think of a lost friend
and the silence is no stranger to itself even
the silence speaks
to the stranger and says things no friend
would ever say

I tell you love is like an ice cream cone on
Sunday afternoon
and the sound of the truck coming still scares
me.

time is a hero to itself
it looks in the mirror
and must say
man I never get old

I go out there

and beat myself up
with armies and atomic bombs
but I never
never
get old.

With Him.

The Kilted Pastures of Verdun now the
landscape before us
the shrieking crying trees of Berlin wondering
now what they have

the savings account meanderings of fear
wasting the days away, the séance of fickle
fate removed by eloquence and statements,
dividing

empires of the past from one another, to cool
worlds, the unholy hour of faith among
the faithless, we are the sunshine, smiling, the
stormy moods of fate
come with them, the old rain just pouring
down, cloudy, grey, I seek
the virtues of another day, going long roads
without complaint, I see

is no easy task for those yearning to be free, I
wonder where the time goes
it seems to me a bitter pill, cast among those
who realized what it was to walk
with.

the ringing in your ears
of the toilet overflowing
all these years

you sweetly swift through the room
the candle in the hands
now on the table

we bend the corners
we breadwinners
everyday a new imperishable opportunity

do you believe the break of day
and what it has to say
to the darkness moving away
i never realize until it is gone
what it is of the past
I have remembered.

what I don't know

won't hurt me
for starters.

in the end I think
I'd rather not know
and am stuck with the sinking feeling
of knowing

the incompleteness of destiny does not take it
back
and my moods are given to reason

I try not to take too much for granted.

why are there visions in the window
looking for me somewhere

when I don't even know myself
who I am
how can it be
that they
know.

poetry is the warm feeling in summer
that stays through the beginning of winter
and let's you walk along the roads

feeling that warmth

maybe it is the ice in the soda glass
or the store sale that's giving away everything
the poets search for words down city streets
and all over town, they find them in peculiar
places

upside down in the trashcan is the headlines
with
upside down words that make bigger sense
that way
words like stop and slow on street signs
we make arrangements to do that.

the time of winter now before me
the rains coming with it
everything changing

I whirl around and watch the sky
some days around here
are so beautiful
it feels like the middle of summer

and the rains, sporadic, like an interlude
I become aware of nature
it feels close to me
I become a companion to it

wanting to embrace
the warmth of the sun in the rain.

omnipotent sorrows
delving
into the cascade
of emotions

that estranges
day from night

I wander through the day
mesmerized
by the enveloping silences

what I learned from a ninety year old man
is you get old
and your bones ache.

challenges

the frozen pale winter
of solitude and remorse
that I wondered
about life's choices

I spent the afternoons dreaming
of new tomorrows

and the cold stood in silence
taking the sun along with it

Notes from Laguna Niguel

I have yet to see the waves
we could be good friends

the sea and I
our lovers at a dance
that never ends

How can I explain

I know how you got caught in the rain
I remember the time, years ago

We stayed at a small hotel
and it turned into a party
I walked along the sand,

far out, towards the rocks
there was a sea lion wailing
and I watched it for hours,
the time moving forward endlessly
My father strolled down the beach
and found me.

He took me by the hand
and led me back.

I carried home a starfish in a bucket
and after a day or two
the starfish died.

"What have we learned?" my father asked me.

"That the starfish is dead!" I replied.

"We have learned that it is not the water
that keeps the starfish alive, it is the
rhythm of the tide in the ocean."

Ten O'Clock Thoughts in the Hotel

Such nonsense
 everything
stay relax

 the sign on the door says

put this in the keyhole if you do not want to be
disturbed.

I take a bath
watch the television for a while

the Russians are marching in the Ukraine
 the President is warning them not to go
they are already there.

How Do I say this to you?

Gently, the ocean moves
turning rocks asunder
guiding the ships toward shore

we see the world distraught
caught in an episode of waves
that seem to create a rhythm to life

we try to understand each other
the modern complexity faces ancient fears
we grope in the darkness for solutions
unwinding one another like clocks
that were broken long ago

we ask each other for certain favors
and then we dream of new worlds
in the emptiness.

Maybe, just maybe

You linger on the former for the bus to pass
the light changes from red to green
but you do not notice
 that the world has suddenly stopped
and then it appears everything is moving
quietly around you; people on their way
everyone towards their own unique
destination
the summer heat pounds against the pavement
before you realize the truth
 someone tells you how to see
how can I ask the birds to laugh with me?
you think to yourself, are these the sides
of destiny, moving beyond you?
 is it the wish of the sun to remain
shining through the evening? Then, a thought,
how does it feel in the darkness?
Perhaps it is just another bright moment
for another side. What are you waiting for?
 Time to go to sleep.

Vision of Neon

You distill the air
in your fist
 raise a glass
and toast
 eternity
Do you think
 one day
in the far off future,
the rain will taste like cement?
They say the honeybee
 is about to disappear
and the fruit of the earth
 will be lost to us
it tasted sweet, like candy
 I'm sure you will always have candy.

The Cold Sharp Pain

Yesterday
you played in elementary school
with Paul, Roger, Brian, Mark
all your friends were there
on the baseball diamond
 screaming at the batter
or in other season you played football
and chased one another down the field
then, after lunch, you went back
into the classroom and read out loud
or studied math and chemistry.

 You never thought you would grow up
and the world would entirely destroy you
you look in the mirror and the age shows
 the times of long lost summers
crinkle in the lines in your eyes
 the shadows and darkness appear
under your eyelids.

 You tell yourself there is still help,
lying to yourself.

This is How It Goes

Let us tell you all about it
the world is a dangerous place.

They try to explain it, to you
What do they say now? Is it the same?

First Sight

The first time
you held her hand
in that moment
 lasting forever
you missed her
 when she said goodbye
 for a long time
the years turning into decades
what could I say
 after so much time
they said it was desperation
 too much insistence
that kept me wanting her
 all these years
it was only love
 at first sight.

What Do We Have Here?

The looks of things?
you make a mistake
that haunts you for life
it is an innocent mistake
but nobody accepts those anymore
there is a roar above the crowd
searching for perfection

then they say to you,
what are you talking about?
There is nothing to explain
nobody is listening
their eyes are shut to principles
there is no time left
to discuss anything.

If We Search Ourselves

What is it we are finding
when we look outside
to understand the world
that is, after all, within us

How do we mark the days
that pass us with the
rising and falling of the sun

Let Me Fill Your Cup With Wine

I wonder what it was like
 for Sappho, Horace, Catullus
in those ancient times
 when the grapes were ripe on the vine
the sun shining in the afternoons
not a cloud in the sky

sometimes it feels as though
 I am too young to know
 the taste of victory
a sweet smell of success
they came looking for the
darkness in everything

I was so overjoyed to greet them
thinking I would be saved
it is a peculiar situation I am in
otherwise things would be smooth

the riot of humanity
 lost to knowledge

they raise their glasses and toast
to the co-existence of man, unsung
heroes blinded by their own perilous
misfortunes, writing at the bench
 for their journeys to begin

I wonder when it stops
 this clock ticking time backwards
our travels cut short in an
educated moment of laughter

what a fond rouse they make of life
asking you to give
to what would not receive

I am torn between emotion and failure
that mark my life in all
my unique destinations,
the whole of it, withdrawn
I used to laugh so much

The House We Lived In

The house we lived in
 had two stories
a winding staircase
 we had a giant television
a pool in the backyard
my father worked in a small studio
built behind the pool
my brother and I shared a room
and my sister had her own
 soon we did construction
and my father turned our room
 into my mom's dressing room
and my brother and I
 got our own rooms.
 I had a bunk bed
and a big desk
 my brother had lots of guitars
my sister played with her toys
we had a wonderful life.

Exchange of Missiles

Missiles over Ukraine

a commercial airliner falls from the sky
rockets over Israel

missiles into Gaza

the two sides exchange dead
terrorism in the Afghan airport

bank robbery in Stockton
three hostages taken

100 m.p.h car chase
all over the world

people are being forced
off their land

in Syria,
millions headed to refugee camps

then, a general announcement
everything looks perfect.

Rolling Out the Red Carpet

The flash of photographers
and the actors smile
 clutching each other gently
this is their moment
 here they come
the crowd cheers
 some of the people
have been waiting for hours
the limousines all lined up for the arrival
 everyone goes inside to see the premiere,
the first showing of the new movie
 will it be a success or failure
will the director get a second chance?
 Will the president of the film company
still have a job tomorrow?
 How will the film critics react?

Interpretation of Dance

Legs moving
 entwined
like lovers
 jumping through the sky

the lights on the stage
 dissolving from white to blur
from blue to orange
 orange to green

the dancer leaps again
 leaps through the air

you cannot hear the sound of feet
 as she lands

there is no music,
 only the sound of a clock
tic, tic, ticking

the dancer is out of time
the curtain closes.

Surrounded by Schedules

on the 28th
it is sure to be certain
by the fifteenth
it will be completely obvious
on or about the fourth of September
everyone will stop thinking completely

one week later
history will disappear
sometime after November 1st
the priests will select new children
to take into their basements

by Christmas
we will have forgotten Christ
for a bag of weed and a line of blow

finally, when easter arrives
they will ship out
and ink the deal with the Aztek chiefs
promising them beautiful women
for more drugs
and the agreement will be sealed.

In My Youth

I loved girls

 I really loved them
most of them broke my heart
and said goodbye
 leaving for some other guy

I thought it was impossible
 to forget them
until I met another one
 even more beautiful

we made love in the afternoons
 and in the evenings
we went out for dinner
 we went dancing
 we drank wine

they were good years.

The Observance of Sin

Don't let anybody ever tell you
that you cannot achieve your destiny
whatever the cause,

 every moment is another scene
another rendezvous with extinction
 the last lens of this speech
has yet to be focused
then there are allowances
 that cannot be made
by the specialists

enjoy a cupcake
 the strategy begins
 with a cherry on top

try not to be astounded
 by the incomplete difference
exchange of looks
 the night exploding with consequences
followed by final apologies

The Desecration of Art in Two Measures

Thirteen years have passed
since the memory of your laughter faded
I have spent much of this time
wondering if the end could have been
different, but all roads lead
back to Rome. What am I to say
in these mortal nights of silences
between us, the motionless events
that misunderstood those great seasons
we spent together in timeless afternoons.
What can I explain to the darkness
of those days you spent in the spotlight
a million people know your name
but none of them will ever
remember you as a father.
I would like to leave a thought
that you were a good one
who always made time for us
what a thing it is
to lose someone you love
in the middle of love.

was it the desecration of art
that left the tide between us unholy
and simple goodbyes do not explain it to me.

now can I remember the interesting
language of our truth
in the context of oblivion
and the catastrophic period
ending those last sentences.

What do I know of your life
before I was born
only the music tells me

in what is left of those measures
you wrote throughout the evenings
struggling to be free
in your art
what does the laughter you left behind
truly understand of your work?

Guessing Games

Try to make believe
what you do is important,
will always be remembered
lie to yourself if you have to
say it is extraordinary what you do
that the work is special
that everything has meaning in your life
that you love life and the world in it
then comes the guessing game
those intrusions into your privacy
steps into your way,
those who gain their acknowledgement
helping you to fail.
They are out there, really they are
It seems like they hate the world
they are determined to control it
who can say why
why, why
that is the guessing game.

People exaggerate when it is convenient
they tell the truth, they live
they come and go into and out of your life
some lie to you about the world
 others are trapped in situations they cannot
escape

it is mesmerizing to me
 how far apart
 reality is from the truth
try to be your best\
find the one thing you are good at and do it

life has certain mysteries
 it is up to you to explore

what can I tell you of the past and present
that will even dimly remind you of the future?

Here we Go Again

I wonder what the world will be like
without butterflies
when I was a child
little yellow daisies were in the yard
and the butterflies played inside them
I would sit in the garden
so curious about their beauty
How it is
that god made such perfect creatures
there was the orange monarch
and the yellow one that looked like
a flying banana

I was simply astounded
by how beautiful the butterflies were
as they danced on the patches of the daisies
and the summer afternoon
seemed to last forever.

Just Another Day

Euripides in his robes
 writing his plays
thousands of years in the past
 and yet, we still absorb
each thought, each phrase in
 just another day

and tomorrow
he will still be there
 for children and adults
to reach for the shelf
 and take down a book
memories of thousands of years
 appear in the language of our minds
 because great writers
 record history
in their art.

One Day

One day

We will in pools on mars
inside silicon domes
of vast domains
we built to escape ourselves
running from our own
constant methodology of destruction
running from atomic bombs
running from unemployment
religious fanaticism, corrupt policemen
intelligence agents without any intelligence
we will take fast flights into the future
trying to escape the people
invading our imagination
we must wait for the men holding flashlights
for the batteries to die
before we take another step
we must sell ourselves on the idea
that everything is perfect
so we have no desire
to change the world.

otherwise we face political appointments
into insane asylums
by Harvard's most creative thinkers
worried about their dope shipments being
compromised
by one unemployed homeless man
who barely graduated high school
shouting freedom from atop the empire state
building

and let us not forget
the great watch makers of history
who never intended these perfect inventions
to stop mankind in its tracks.

and now to move another inch
you must forget the time
although the world tells you
that is impossible
and you must risk everything to do it
although it seems futile and armies
will knock you a foot backwards
and say happy to see you make progress

and this one is not about the dog
who saw the world from his place
on the sidewalk, gazing at upside down cows
although it was beautiful

you have to examine yourself
for being human
and find some idea of perfection
in the idea
that you are not perfect

and you have to be comfortable with that
even while the world is trying to change you
what explanations you offer to the world
try to do it in poetry, in the writing
in the music, the painting
do not let an opportunity slip by
to express yourself, your ideas
sound out your initiatives on the page

Today I Watched

Today we watched
men meeting other men
at the side of a road
and the drone came from above
sending a missile into them.

nobody even wondered
what they were doing
or why they died
or why we couldn't use diplomacy
to change the situation

we just take their lives
and called it a video

men advanced art
for thousands of years
to express life and represent it
today the artists have learned to take pictures
and end life altogether.

it is not the integrity of art
that I wonder about
it is the integrity of men
who have abused art

and abused men
with overly sophisticated intentions
they believe reach beyond those
of other men
I fear the future
will bury many great artists
in the hostility they suffer
for love of one
I do not see it as passion
as much as fear of the unknown
and those puny brainwashed
verb addled dilettantes
who hold the buttons of creation
and refuse to create
lest their leadership
be trampled
by a better mousetrap.

Realizations of Time

Time moves
it moves in
it moves out
the doors open and close
parents, lovers, friends
move in and out of your life
but you remain timeless
like a fragile piece of broken glass
the motions of time age you
but your words are timeless
they haven't even been born yet
most of them
are not even a part of the world
some have been sealed forever
as they try to jam them
down the toilets
call it a new civilization
the birth of ignorance
like the birth of the renaissance
only much more meaningless.

The New Arrivals

They came on buses from Ohio,
Denver, Virginia, South Carolina, New York

They came from everywhere
to find the glitter and glamour of Hollywood
they were picked up at the bus terminals
by talent managers who signed them
immediately to multi-year contracts
and they spent their money on photographers
where they got their celebrity looks
and they were sent out on auditions
where they performed their lines
consummately
for casting directors who put them on
video tape and sent out the results
after being reviewed by television producers.

There were hundreds of people at those
auditions
and people waited around for years for their
chance
some of them never made the big time,
some of them, most of them, in fact

many returned home to their parents
and got jobs at the car wash
or as accountants or bus drivers.

Hollywood seemed like an endless
eternity filled with hope
and everyone wanted a piece of it.

They woke up to drugs and hangovers
seduced by the lifestyle
it was a bottomless pit.

Some found recovery
others overdosed
and never got a chance
to find their way out of
the meaninglessness of it all.

A very few led fulfilled lives
and found happiness
those were the ones nobody could understand.

The Tragedy of the Joke

Someone once said
the only people who suffer more than the
poets
are the comedians.

Today the great comic Robin Williams
was found dead of asphyxiation
the police ruled it a suicide.
He flew into the television in the 1970's
playing a man from outer space
He made strange noises and strange
expressions
and the whole world fell into hopeless laughter
with him
He catapulted into fame after that
making his way into movies
and performed his stand up comedy
in front of millions of people, a sold out
theater
and a simulcast television audience.
The news reports he struggled with
addiction
and after an affair with cocaine
he lapsed into alcoholism.
It is a fact that he even won an Oscar
for his role as a psychiatrist.
He had a wonderful way of seeing the world
and everyone will miss him.

NANU-NANU!

The Neon Lights and Broadway Signs

men sparing change
 in front of subway tunnels
mid-afternoon travelers
 up and down the stairs
eating sandwiches on their way
 ice cream cones, frozen yogurt
in New York city, you can find anything
whatever you need is just a phone call away
millions of taxicabs headed uptown,
downtown, midtown
fruit vendors in front of their shops
bargaining with customers, three for a dollar
people heading into Italian restaurants,
Chinese joints, Indian food
a million different cultures colliding into one
enormous cacophony of sights and sounds

I saw the paintings of Reginald Marsh
at the Whitney Museum
I saw Pablo Picasso at the
Museum of Modern Art.

I rode subways in the melting summer heat
on my way to Wall Street
in my new suit.
It is a city of theater
a city of inspiration
you could go out for dinner
 every night of your life
and never go to the same restaurant
it has its own vibration
 it is the pulse of an island
where every man and every woman
can make their way
up the ladder of success

I can still picture the sound
of Miles Davis blowing trumpet
on a street corner
with only the wind listening.

Whatever May Come

You have to be strong
learn from other's mistakes
even your own

you have to try and understand
the source of your own strength

find a way to make life exciting
without hurting yourself, hurting others

write for the sake of art
make your way through the world
plant your feet firmly on the ground
tell yourself
I am here to stay
come what may
don't let the world defeat you.

I can't remember what she was wearing.

She said she was from Austin Texas
I bought her lunch
at a nice little place on Robertson Blvd.
I can't remember what I ordered

I can't remember what she ate either
All I know is it must have gone well
because she invited me back
to her tiny little apartment
in the middle of West Hollywood
and we took off each other's clothes
in a big hurry
and we made love
for about a week straight

I don't even remember
ever leaving her apartment
during that time

I guess we went down the street
to the market a few times
and we got in her jeep
and loaded up the back

drove from L.A to Berkeley

I had a little place
 on the East side of town
and it started to rain
 we were making love
the roof started to leak
 a few weeks went by
she left me
 to see her sister in Boston
I sat in the room alone
 on the floor
the electricity had been shut off
 and the furniture was being repossessed
but the memories of her
 lingered on
ah the memories.

I Slept for Two Days

I don't know what it was
 simply put, I couldn't get out of bed
I tossed and turned
 from one side to the other

I cannot relate to you
 the suffering of this disease
it makes no sense to me
 it makes no sense to anyone
but no one is willing to do anything about

they say we were warned
we were told
this would happen
 when they forced those drugs upon us
what kind of crazy world is this
 that would deny the pain
and look for more
 some of us tried to understand
one another
and were cast down

for our beliefs

What It is To Believe

Try to believe in yourself
first of everything
believe in your family
try to arrange your life
according to your beliefs

believe in what you do
even while others
do not believe you

it will satisfy you to
keep yourself happy
despite the onslaught
of a maddening crowd.

With Your Eyes Averted

Don't let your mind slip
into the madness
of so many
preoccupied
people
giving in

let yourself triumph
in your art

dive into the meaning
of your soul
find yourself looking for you

never stop giving up on you

True Grit

It was a Saturday night
and it was getting kind of late
but we decided to turn on the television
and watch a John Wayne movie
we laughed to each other
about how many comedians
have at one time or another
done an imitation of that great actor
his swagger, the cadence of his mighty voice
strong and loud, down to soft and low
and it really must be something
to be the hero of a movie
and never die
no matter how many people
are chasing you.

The Day the Music Stopped

the wait sign
that will now
fill eternity with silence

where once there was music
writing in the silence
the shape of an hour glass
pushing against
the sides of jazz
the interminable silence
coming at you
from every direction
wasting every second of your life
offering you nothing but unkindness
bringing you to such anger
you find yourself shaking
with each trembling word.

I Want to See You Working

When everything breaks down
and nothing works anymore,
the computer won't function,
the television is broken
the lights begin to flicker and die
when it seems like nothing works

I want to see you working
there should be absolutely
nothing in your way
nothing can stop
the creation of art
not lack of money,
lack of love
nothing.

The March Across Time

There is a cross
 between the minute
 and the second
the hours,
counting down
what I once believed
 may no longer be the truth
the things that I relied on as a child
we grow old
 and the time speaks for us
delivering its answer
 in waves
across channels of space
 I cannot get used to
 how the time
 disappears
saying nothing.

Sounds of small feet on the floor
the whole world laughs with those

maybe they will grow up
to read Plato's republic
or Faulkner, Fitzgerald, Hemmingway
Lillian Hellman, Allen Ginsberg
Gregory Corso, a million others

learn to love reading
 enjoy learning
enjoy enjoy enjoy

what will the future whisper
 what of these words?
these words are the albatross
 of the mariner.

This Pen was my father's pen

my father collected pens
he was a man of great taste
and he appreciated the finer things in life

 I remember the day
 he took me to Brook's brothers
for there big sale
 and we went downtown to the store
I think it was the first time
 I had ever been shopping with my father

What Do I have to Lose

You cannot play your life out like a gambler
don't take your chances on a sure thing
try not to loan money to friends
who promise to pay you back right away

what does it matter to you
who is in love with who?

if only I could wish you
a world of joy
I often wonder of the future
where the march of time
is leading the mass of humanity

what will become of words
the world has no use for?
it is hard to say
but I do not lose time
in the effort of writing

Images of Los Angeles, 2014

In that August heat
I was reminded of the times
I spent as a child
growing up in a great big house
I had a father
who never left my mother's side
my parents were there for me
everyday of my life
my father never gave up on my mother
and my mother never gave up on my father
I think they both had a deep respect
for the sanctity of marriage
they never dreamed of a world
where there children

were not a daily
part of there lives
and I was lucky to have
parents so faithful
to each other.

Geronimo and the Indians

So many years ago
the Indians wandered this land
and hunted the buffalo
those people were foreigners
to the people who landed
in America to settle on the plains
and there were great quarrels
between the Indians and settlers
so many of the Indians died
fighting for their land, their people,
their way of life.
Many were sent off
to reservations
and many agreements
were broken.
Geronimo was the chief of the Apaches
and a great warrior.
The Indians surrendered
and Geronimo was last seen
handing out autographs.

There must Be a Way

When I write poetry

I begin to listen
to my inner voice
some call it a muse

I guess that is what it is

I do not ever want to retire
from writing

because there would be nothing to do
and my thought is
you have to keep yourself busy

what does the sea have to say to the moon?
what to the stars?

What does the sun have to say to the earth?

Who can know the untold secrets of nature?
not even the poets
have that much insight.

We simply write

what we feel.

How Can Words Express

The stones march across the desert
time lingers on
it's not so complicated
we live our lives
we are children
we get old
we die
somewhere in between
we fall in love
it's not the big mess
some people say it is
in fact, the world is what you make of it.
How many days go by
where the world has no recorded history?
everyday
some great new event
offers to remind us
of the progress of civilizations.

Friendly People

I had so many friends
I lost along the way
It's just
I got so damn busy
trying to make my way
through the world
I forgot how important it is
to share the world with our friends
sometimes they would call to say hello.
We would go to dinner, see a movie
there were always good times
to remember how special it is
to have people in your life
you can share your experiences with

sometimes the world becomes frightening
my how great it is to have friends
who pull you through those dark times

Let Yourself Go!

Some people paint pictures
and see the world
a different way.

Some people are Doctors
and grapple with human life
trying to make people feel better

some are musicians
and make the magic of song

it is important to have a discipline
and do one thing with excellence
not to make life too complex
by trying your hand
at many things

If I change my Mind

I wake up
and cook some toast
I take a bag of sugar
and mix it with some cinnamon
then I put the butter on the bread
and put the cinnamon sugar on top

sometimes for dinner
I cut up an onion
and put them in flour
stick them in oil
and fry them
cook a steak
put the onions on top
make a salad
and some avocado

if I change my mind
I call the restaurant
down the street
for delivery.

Dance Baby, Dance

Oh, I used to love to dance
hit the floor
with a beautiful girl
or even alone
just to listen
to the music
feel it run
right through me

it was such a free
time of life

those long Hollywood nights
that went on forever
the beautiful girls
milling around the ground floor
most of them just wanted to watch
everyone else
but it was a wonderful time of life.

it was a time

when everything seemed possible
like there was no limitation
and I don't understand
these limitations
it starts with
don't talk to your food
and when we are children
it seems like
we could do anything
in fact.

we could make up things
that nobody ever thought of
we could dream up
new ideas and invisible realities
then everyone around us
tells us how to live
what to do
what to think
how to feel
until we are forever changed.

The Unwinding Clock

Magazine stand in New York City
selling new editions of the morning paper
a man pays for candy and steps away
a woman offers change for a can of soda
maybe they meet and fall in love

or should we plan the world with long silences
where nobody reaches out
to talk to anybody
afraid of spiritual condemnation
from a moral society of antiquarians
pointing at books of space aged religion
telling us to trust no-one

yeah that's it.

Say, You don't Say

In his twenties Irving Thalberg was a very successful man.

While he was making feature films
of the Marx brothers clowning the whole town

on the other side of the world
the Jews were being exterminated in camps

it should be no surprise that he died young
of heart failure.

The Late Afternoon Heat

It's the L.A. heat
 and the traffic never dies
cars piled on top of cars
the shop keepers hiding in there places
even as the darkness falls
the heat continues
football season begins today
 the Packers playing against Seattle
third quarter is on by the time I get home.
I check the mail
there's a package and a
slip for another one I missed.
That means another trip to the post office
it seems the whole world is in hiding
the details of the plan
 read us between the lines

The Plastic Paper Doll Factory

You should be aware
 of the voice
hidden inside the enemies
who provoke conflict
all over the earth
 they feel immune to the disaster
 while they create it
waging war to discredit everything
in their way. How sad it is.

The Hopelessly Insane

They sleep in cardboard boxes
under freeways
in parking lots
all over America.
They came marching down the streets
with their shopping carts
some of them fought in wars
they still remember.
there are so many of them
that the rest of us
have simply forgotten about them
they make laws
so the police can carry there things away
when they aren't looking
and even the judges admit
that is ridiculous.

The City Lights

We are blinded to the stars in the sky
from the lights of the city
we take our guesses at astrology
 or try to learn from Dane Rudyhar's
interpretation of the sabian symbols
 we try to establish our individuality
in a tribal community
 taught to think the same
as if
 that would save us
it is hard to say
 what motivates man to discover new things
and some people are called genius
 while others are labeled insane
Van Gogh never sold a painting in his lifetime
who is to say what represents art
 or artistic talent?

it only seems that time

is the final judge
of true greatness

You Reach Out

Never stop trying
to be yourself
even if the consequence
is torture.

Do not give into the idea
that you are not important
or have something to contribute to the world

there are hard roads and there are easy ones
then there are certain ones
that seem impossible

those are the ones filled with crowds
of respected people
telling you whatever you do
forget about it.

In the Difference

Somewhere between
the money you made
and what you have left
after the gas is paid for,
the telephone, the insurance
the groceries; there isn't enough
to even breathe
eleven thousand jobs are lost each week
and I wonder what these people do
when the unemployment runs out
are those the ones you find
digging through garbage cans
standing in front of restaurants
asking for the leftovers?

Is that the great victory,
a paper bag filled with half-eaten
chicken and potatoes?

The Late Night Memories

It's three in the morning
I am sorting out family pictures
time to go to sleep
but I just can't leave them

Pictures of my father from long ago
remind me of so many good years
the last thing he said to me was
"be a good boy"
and he was a good father.

Who climbed above the atmosphere
in spaceships rocketing to mars
exploring the universe for new forms of life
while men died homeless in the streets of Los
Angeles

lost without food or shelter

this was called scientific advancement
who broke, unemployed and without families
were led into rooms by analysts
seeking to answer their rage with medications
as if that would provide solutions to the
eternal never ending oblivion they were
condemned

to live in under the definition of policy.

who bleak, forlorn and ruined
decided against the pill offered free
in lieu of food; tambien, then for that
were told they would be shot in the arm with
dope

or face institutionalization to promote
the business of militaries and Democracy, a
republic that lost its touch in the letters NO.

Who once beautiful and perfect were made
terrible and ugly under the terms of progress

worlds of atrophies and falling, collapsing
people, told that space was waiting for them
if they only came up with a contribution to
join a new religious order of mass suicide
then, in front of everyone, this mass delirium
collected the lives, hopes, dreams of everyone
and put all of their efforts into a
tiny little box filled with absolutely nothing
and called that perfection.
then with hands outstretched, they waved
flags symbolizing new beginnings and shot
everyone.

The penultimate warning came with the
death of a million butterflies and nobody
paid any attention except for one old
beatnick hippy who went searching
for the thousands of disappearing people
in Argentina.

Then our government saw by
serious questions concerning lipstick,
pantyhose
and a tee shirt lying in the French rouge heat
of Marseille before sailing to the Crimea
for more bodies.

The great writers suffered massive heart
attacks
before finalizing their last jokes on humanity
by not publishing their own legacies of work.

The dead were buried in the sand while

waitresses
marched forward carrying trays of diet-cola
and hamburgers.

Let us not forget to point out that while
the genocide of WW2 proceeded,
Fred Astaire danced with Ginger Rogers
dressed in a tuxedo.

Then, in an effort to explain everything
absolute silence was ordered ending
two thousand years of Athenian debate

and in an effort to correct the problem
an additional five minutes of speech
was ordered before the next delivery of sushi
and 30,000 tons of cocaine, just enough
to last America about three days.

then, crying “get over it”, another 20,000 tons
were ordered.

then, sharp as tacks, they entered the office
of the President, advising, it’s your decision,
just make it for one more shipment or we’ll kill
you.

Who, empty of death and still tortured
sat in movie theaters watching lovers on
screens
before going home to dream about
becoming entertainers so they could at least
pretend to fall in love.

Who, clutching their baloney sandwiches
went searching for the souls who were

destroyed
so they could make claim to have saved them
with bread, it was then I envisioned her
as an asterisk on page 2.

Who, adored by their landlords came to work
looking for an excuse to kill the guy in the
elevator
who looked funny at the girl who got off
on the second floor.

Who conducted a séance for Harry Houdini
and still could not escape.

Who, misunderstood by father time went
looking for mother nature and was
condemned to be disfigured for the crime
of enjoying life.

Who caused endless discussions
and claimed to have never done anything.

Who fell in love with a blank stare
and was pronounced guilty in a half dozen
courts of law.

Who went soul searching to Florida
and threw his last bag of pot out the
car window on Federal Highway.

Who left dozens of typed and handwritten
in places he can't remember.

Who was accused of purchasing a mail order
rifle before shooting Kennedy and going to the
movies.

Who claimed at the time to be drinking
a can of soda from a vending machine
while watching a dominos game in the
lunchroom.

Who was found solely at fault for the
machinations of an entire government,
led by a panel of moralists seeking to
save the world from sanity.

Secret shadow armies who wrote secret code
words and sheets of pages that translated into
a hundred
different languages as “we need more dope
and callgirls.”

explaining to the Court they had no time
to explain the massacre because they
had important dates while there
co-counsel pleaded for the incineration of
history

what lives we led in our empty apartments
filled with flat screen televisions and baking
powder
surfing the channels and laying on couches
waiting for lovers who never arrived
or became counted as the politically
disappeared.

What horrible scenes of caramel frappuccino
seated alone in small cafes
with a million people condemned to silence
afraid to break the thick spell of disaster
with a single hello.

In The Town

Take that! You beautiful set of circumstances

peculiar sound of water falling from a fountain
writing in a Beverly Hills park,
wondering where my life went
coy moving slowly through the pond
children laughing, leaping in the air
I should say, there was the sight
of a small pair of ducks
and I smiled for the first time
in a long time

the kid got on a scooter and left
his mother wished me luck
with the writing.

What lectures of blue moons
in between streets made for
porcelain dolls who cheated oblivion
by remaining perfectly still during the
hurricane

we shouted to the passing celebrities
on their way down the red carpets
and informed on each other to secret police
regarding our expensive taste for
new york steaks and onions
grilled to perfection in oil after
being dipped in flour.

Then I dreamed she suddenly
got in touch with me
that the drowning silence
was broken by some honest
intention to love
and we shared a moment
intertwined on the hottest day of the year

Then, of course, the silence returned
and I was alone on the bench in the park

waiting for the sun to sink low in the
sky before climbing into my car
in s
earch of a dinner spot and
another cup of coffee.

When I was in my teenage years
I would walk through a small garden area
of the city on my way to school
and there was always this homeless man
in tight black spandex pants
dancing in the middle of the grass
whenever I went to school
and whenever I returned
he was always there, dancing.

Years later, after the house was gone
and we had moved out of town
I thought about the dancer
and wonder where he had gone.

Then one Sunday afternoon I drove
through my old city and
saw the dancer.

I approached him for the first time
and just sat there staring at him.

"What do you want?" he asked me.
I had never heard him utter a single word
before
"I haven't seen you in 25 years." I said.

It was nice to see him still dancing.

Out of the Shadows

It was never really easy
even when things were going smooth
there were always debts to be paid\
and don't ever feel like the world owes you a
favor,
because it doesn't.

How can you explain the darkness to the light?
What does it mean to be afraid?

My father said that fear was irrational
that you had to live through your fear
that it didn't really exist.

I see a man sifting through garbage
and I wonder if the fear is real?

What do we have here?

Belief is the perception of trust
between people who have nothing to gain
other than friendship and understanding.

So many years had passed
since first we began
to believe in one another.

All those lost and stolen nights
now upon us, in the winter
of our moments together.

We spent so much time
just talking and reminding
each other of laughter.

A simple glimpse of time

The memory of a glass of wine
sharing dinner with my father
those days feel like
a million years ago

they tremble and sway inside me
reminding me of those
lost years that never depart
they belong to me, like a thousand
fragile summer days
reaching out to me
from some far off distant place

I open up the book of time
and remember him fondly
it takes away the distractions
of what ceaseless hours beyond them

I wish those memories
could stay forever.
Maybe they do.

What do you think about that?

A symphony of voices
raised to argue a point
I would like to write something important
that the world will understand
whether it be like Hannibal
and the march through Rome
or Columbus discovering America
it should be authentic and true to myself
what can be said about the 21st century
that began with buildings exploding
Armies beheading their captives
airplanes missing out of a clear blue sky
as if time turned the world upside
poetry accused of violating the natural order
suicide bombers await their virgins in paradise
and some believe that is another one for Las
Vegas
I want to say something to the world
and not follow the millions into silence.

The Different Times of Day

It seems so long ago
that I walked inside the garden
where the vines hang down from the columns
and the grapes are growing in bunches
there are a million moments of the day
that now escape my memory

it is amazing how the ages
deteriorate the natural environment
right along with us
I am stumbling through the categories of
chance
into certain oblivions that take me nowhere
sometimes I am lost to myself
in the empty hours of the afternoons
contemplating jazz and the sensations of
summer

Funny how the seasons change. The heat of
August
moving into the rains of September and on ...

what can I say about the movement
of history quietly making its way backwards.
The Discussions Turn To

I was never one
to sit in bars
and drink all day.

I did not believe

in wasting the hours that way.

I enjoyed reading and like to dance
then the days turn into years
and I gave up on dancing
I wish I hadn't
I would like to dance again

I remember those careless evenings
falling in love to the music
now it feels like the night is filled with silences
that only serve to remind me of yesterday
I wish that I could believe myself more
and seek the approval of others a lot less.

The Moving Hands of Time

I dare say
it was momentous
every New Year
turning the clock to another time
what fun it was
to celebrate
the onslaught of time
changing us forever
whatever happened
to those early days of childhood
when we were not afraid
to talk to our food
and pretend the carrots were talking back
we fail to understand the significance
of our own value
as the years move beyond us
it is hard to say what will be left of them
or if even the poetry will be remembered.

The Filth They Leave You

What I know of the world
fits into the chamber of an ink pen
so many hard hearted callous people
pretending they adore the world
while they quietly destroy it.

We are not immune to disease
we cannot know when the end of time
will suddenly devour us
we can only hope that we will get through
the years that pile onto one another
how incredible it seems that our whole lives
can be completely nullified in a moment of
grief
that what we say could be held against us
eternally
while we are crying for love lost
the filth they leave you

The Multiplicity of Dreams

I forgot to explain myself
I fell in love a million years ago
and roamed the earth like a dying dinosaur
the spectacular vision of time
amidst the ruins of eternal suffering
the Buddha believed that suffering is a part
of life
and I wondered why this has to be
why can't we dance through the ages
recklessly, aimlessly finding our goals
who can say what will become of the earth
maybe we return from endless lifetimes
who knows
perhaps we never come back
some say it depends on karma
myself, I wonder what the truth is
maybe I will never know
who knows
our lives revolve around the march of time
we are so timid and scared sometimes
funny how that works.

The Subject of Time

I was headed North
on the freeway to Pasadena
and the car was running hot
the traffic was moving slowly
everything was a standstill
I dreamed of my turtle
crawling across the floor
hiding in the shelves, disappearing
only to be found weeks later
dead and dried up
oh well. who can say.
maybe he wanted it that way.
Who can tell me what happened to the turtle?

One on the toilet

I wonder if this has ever been done?
what a fantastic place to try
and understand what happened to my life.
It is certainly hard to say
in fact, nobody dares say anything
the entire world has lapsed
into the most perfectly frightening silence

I can only listen to the sound
of my own dump.
Maybe somewhere in the halls
of government
they are listening to its echo.

The Shift Into An Alternative Reality

It is up to you
to change your own mind about things
the world will pawn off
so many dangerous things to you
telling you in no uncertain terms
how good they are for you
even though they may ruin your life
there should be a boundary
between your will
and the will of others
the ordered world
would say this is ridiculous
that we should all be as one
but we are not one
we are many
all of us different
embrace your individuality
and live to please yourself
just be careful
not to hurt each others feelings.

What a Frozen Set of Circumstances

The light dissolves into a million things
relating the frozen hours to one another
we speak to one another in riddles
and embrace the unfortunate spectacle
of natural disaster with a certain style
the whole frame of mankind
belongs to the unbelieving
who march through history
without a doubt
that what they do
is wrong.

Then there are those that try to change
the world for the better
and they are put in the category
of the mentally challenged

try not to let it disturb you.

Doing The Wrong Thing

Everything you try to achieve
the most honest motivation of success
it seems the darkest forces
invade your consciousness
and ask you to do
entirely the incorrect thing
if it is the devil, Lucifer
reigning down upon the earth
then every minute of every day
is another excuse to fight
against these forces
so unrelenting
and passionate.
Then there are times
you do what you have to
in order to survive
the context of a world
mad ad itself
waiting to explode.

A Million Ways to Skin a Cat

the fields of time
 uninhabitable to man
we shift from one dimensional space
that is more reasonably intuitive
of progress and not demise

we must carry forward the legacy of the past
mistakes without forgetting there are also
significant accomplishments that will remain
 indelible in the minds of the human race
without trying to figure
 out how we leave them behind
we carry them with us.

The Genuine Lack of Concern

it only goes to show you
what astounding knowledge
is used to condemn
the abilities of mankind
 and tear them down
from their high places
 all over the world

the poets do not concern themselves
with the disintegration of a civilization
completely oblivious to its own demise
from the bottom of a glass of alcohol

Do You Know?

A million times
I have told myself
not to misunderstand
the nature
of what is art.

It is difficult to realize
the impact art has on generations
when this is a matter of time
passing slowly by
while everything about it disappears
art slowly emerges into the forefront
of human endeavor
a sign post that leaves its mark
on the vast stretches of future
ringing out to the eternal sunsets
that come to meet each new day
we realize how different
the world could be
through the hands of the artist.

I Left Myself A Long Time Ago

What sudden instances of time
have remained immortal
while they ask us to see
the passage of time.

Typically

You find yourself
in the middle of your life
what you know of sorrow
and told of joy
is impressionable to you
the hours of fleeting time
send away the storms of memory
that undefined shadow of days
beyond the glimpse of distilled
emergencies, blistering into sandstorms
and troops marching across deserts
in one hundred and fifteen degree heat
canteens and fatigues slowly moving through
the oblivion of Islam and Mohammedan
thoughts
rage of infinite disasters upon us
twilight of yesterdays eager to dismiss
the spreading sickness into our generations.

The Bliss of Afternoons

We go there
into the bliss
of fine afternoons
and deep vines
of lost seasons
the sudden stolen summers
long past
what gives, I wonder
in those sparkling shimmering
almost perfect evenings
of unholy sorrows
that would not lift
upon the face of humanity
it does not believe me
those insidious train wrecks of people
lingering throughout the dormant vistas
absolving themselves of disappointment
such enchanting evenings.

We Begin Again

This fragrant stolen evening\
holding onto us with its moon
that gives no laughter
 we are compromised
by the situations
 people adore us into
try not to be misled
by the pleading extants of change
who ask for progress and drive you nowhere
we love the way the time moves
forgetting everything
even the disasters
that scream through history
asking to be free of pain
when it grips us unrelentingly
and they say to you
you are just fine.

When Everyday is Passover

Who worked their hands to the bone
and were called lazy
who were cast into slavery
wandered into deserts
were purged at Masada;

Let us not forget those who died there
did so because they would rather be dead than
slaves
who chanted in the language of Hebrew
to become one with God
who recited the Shema by morning and in the
evening
who were tormented for their beliefs
and who were lost as a religion
to those around them
who misunderstood
what they could not understand

What's the subject?

You put your mind to it
pursue it with serious intentions
these words, on the page, in front of you
they glimmer on the light
the way angels dance upon rivers
of a thousand gone moments
in a million years of near catastrophes
but the words remain with you
and carry their song
along with them.

I ask myself

All those dirty clothes on the floor

I ask myself
to find a place for them
every morning I wake up
and make my bed

I always make sure to do that
but the dirty clothes
they pile up

I don't know what to do them.

The Saturated Color Bar

Indistinct notions of how we conduct ourselves
reading Plato in the twilight of oblivion
or digesting the infinite wisdom of Livy
there are sentimental phrases
that catch our attention
We disperse into the square
clutching our protest signs
making governments remember atrocities
they are mostly willing to forget

she dyes her hair with bleach
and sits on the stairs at the college
laughing with her friends
I say hello and it begins
a love affair I now remember
we were so young
exploring everything
like it was new
the memories fresh inside me
I want to relive what has been
because tomorrow
frightens me.

The Hang Ups

People call the office
and hang up
I wonder why they do that
I say "hello..who is there?"
and nobody answers.
Just the sound of the phone
hanging up.

I come home
and the package I am expecting from China,
a new fountain pen
hasn't arrived yet.
They shipped it two months ago
and it still hasn't arrived.
I wonder what you call that...
late..

The Timeliness of Process

Everyone standing around
with their mouths shut
pointing at each other's things
that, interestingly enough, is what they call
knowledge.

People hurt one another
for no reason
then they say "look out"
so they can do it again.
What a special moment
when that happens
everybody laughs
it is always'
lots of fun
our dreams, they come true
or they fall apart
who can say why
one way or another.

It's what you say in the middle of the night

I wonder if I ever talk in my sleep
sometimes I dream ancient things
and others I dream of the future
what is strange to me
is that I can never remember
saying anything in a dream
it is a soundless cloud of memory
and in dreams, words have no meaning.
The world goes by without us
while we lapse into unconsciousness
and build our own worlds
I never gave myself a chance
to understand other languages
I never spoke, French, Spanish, Russian
or any others.

I spoke English and I simply
could not comprehend foreign words
people act without thinking
they fail to understand one another's
words.

Another Long Day

My boss asks me to fill out this phony lease
so I can register it at the West Hollywood City
Hall
and then go for parking passes
to a place I don't even live
I think to myself, this sure is a lot of b.s.
for a simple paycheck
but then, there is the rent to consider
and buying gas, groceries, even the bird seed
costs
so many times on the job
you do what they ask you
while you are wondering why you are doing it
another great reason why I enjoyed
working for myself.

The Papers I sent Late

The certificate of service
swore on god almighty
that I mailed the papers on Friday.
Then I didn't get around
to mailing them until Monday.

So this is my great
atonement to God
for mailing them late.

Until I Go To Sleep

The clock ticking the minutes down
maybe there is something you forgot
in those last hours before sleep
maybe you forgot to do something
say something, believe something
what does it matter?

People say they love you
they feel one way or another
depending on the season
I don't know what to think.

If I could Dance with You

Those were the days I knew
not simply grey and blue
the love came shining through
it's not the way you dress
what is the deep suspense
combining elements?
Life is an open door
someone explains to you
it is the most important
thing you will ever do.
do not be afraid
to express yourself
as an individual.

What You Give to Time

It begins
with a thought
the invention
of an idea
it belongs to you
it is something
you share
with the world
it is a
timeless
part of you
Perhaps it cannot be explained
from beginning to end
what you give to time
is something
the darkness
and silence
cannot reach.

The Stillness of Rhyme

What do I know
 of the silences of times
that fill the empty hours
of my days with journeys
 through the imagination
we soar through the stillness
 I wonder how our
personality develops
from the inspiration of others
do we assimilate
 the qualities of our heroes?
Drink their wine?

The Difference

There are always
going to be differences
between people
among nations, tribes

you search inside yourself
to bring the world together
challenging the old order.

A Song of the Sun

The solar flares
whipping through space
moving the dust
into the infernal
the moon does not remember
yesterdays of sorrows
only the tides change
with its shape.

We Hold on to Hope

You look around the city streets
men living in cardboard boxes
women dragging along shopping carts
an entire cityscape
that seems unknown to them
what do they understand
 of civilization and progress
what can we do
 to make a difference
in their lives
I want to know
 what we must do
for those who cannot even
hold on to hope.

Our Lives Entwined

The minutes turn into hours
and days
marching across the landscape of time
we were lovers once,
you and I
the sun reminds the moon
now there is a distance
that removes us
from one another
when you rise, I fall
it is always the same
we are strangers to ourselves
you and I
we exist apart
lingering above the earth
our lives entwined.

Put the Chicken in at 450°

You baste the chicken
in barbeque sauce
rock and roll music
plays down the street
the evening is cooler than you remember
for many months
 the oppressive heat
has begun to lapse
finally in October.
The evening sky is grey
 turning dark soon
it's cold enough for a sweater
I have to vacuum my room
and clean the bathroom
little jobs that need to get done.

Living in Los Angeles

The summer heat
the beach
the freeways
I go shopping in town
or I go to the movies
I don't hang out in bars anymore
I don't even drink wine
sometimes we go out for dinner
Chinese food, Italian, Japanese
there are a million places to go
everywhere you look the city is filled with
excitement
I enjoy the parks and museums
what a pleasure it is
to live in a city filled
with so many different people
the diversity, wherever you go
people trying to understand each other
a city just waking up to itself.

Once Upon a Time

When we moved to Beverly Hills, California
I was five years old
the new house was like a dream
we lived one block from the school
I could walk there by myself
I suppose it made me more independent
we would ride our skateboards and bicycles
around the little town
we would explore the alleys and small streets
everyday was a new adventure
we would climb the trees and play football
we would come over for dinner at sundown
we did our homework
before watching television
listen to the radio
buy records at the little record store
there was always something to do
we grew up
and kept in touch with one another
those were good years, long ago.

The Right to Refuse

I keep telling myself
time and time again
this was a free country
now, you have to fight
for that freedom
you have to speak of it
in your words
you have to feel
as if
it were attainable
even though
it may be
desperately
out of....
reach

I Tell Myself

It isn't wrong to love
sometimes they just don't
love you back
what can you do?
remain friends...
that's it.
find somebody new
there is always someone new
you don't have to worry
love will eventually find you
it is hard to say when
or in what circumstances
but somehow
love will find you.

The Misfortune of Being Me

When I was forty five years old
I got a sickness that would not go
I was told by the Doctors
that I would live with it
forever.
that there was no cure
nothing I could take
nothing I could do
it was just something
I had to live with
I cannot say
that it did not make me angry
I wondered why god could not change
the way things worked out
I just remember thinking
when I was a younger man
everything was right
and now I live with a pain
that never leaves.

Drinks All Around

A toast to...

what are we toasting to...?
to better days... to meeting someone new..?
it really doesn't matter to me
because
I don't drink anymore

How do I catch up
on all those last years

the rivers that run through me
chocolate and other candy
rivers of licorice and melted icicles
the coffee is ready.
I go outside and check the mail
there is nothing there
another interesting day
has come and gone.

Inside the Beating Heart

I never realized
how beautiful it is
just to feel like yourself
until I no longer could
I wonder what it would be like
to meet myself
twenty years ago
I wonder what I would say to me
perhaps there was a chance
I didn't take
or a road I never travelled
some frost colored place
where my memories
would meet up with
my ambitions
and what would we say
to each other
in that quiet moment alone.
I wonder.

When the World Awakens

Some infinite beauty
explains to you
what it is to live
within the boundaries of truth
 she tells you of the times
that lost you in grief and sorrows
how typical it is
 a person could refuse to understand you
at the time you were understanding them most
 I live each day
remembering the people
who influenced my life the most
it was so simple
life
when I was a child
my eyes open to a million
possibilities
the nature of things
unknown
and wanting to learn
never wanting
to stop learning.

Wishful Thinking

Walks along the avenues
 books filled with tears
the misinterpretation of critics
 the days pass by slowly
I think about those times
 the world was large and unknown
anything was possible
the game was in getting ahead
and it seems the only thrill
is getting into bed and going to sleep
did I waste my life
or was I over-run by the banality
of people who refused to see the art in music?
maybe it was wishful thinking
believing in a world
that would become greater
than the sum of its parts.

Finding it Funny

Disease
comes upon the earth
turning the flowers blue
people say
a long time ago
we lived in caves
and wore animal skins
to comfort us,.
Dinosaurs
roamed the earth
and were soon made extinct
by an ice age
 that froze everything
Now we use computers
and pretend
we know each one another
when we do not really
know
or love
or believe
each other.

What Everyone Knows

Try to move beyond
common knowledge
what everyone knows
if you look into the heart of the matter
you will reach undiscovered knowledge
elements of time and history
completely unknown to us.

À La Mode

The warm apple pie
tastes better with ice cream
I walk along the avenues
wander into new stores
 looking at the winter's season fashions
 my car needs fixing
a part is missing
something about my life
is incomplete
without it.
If I could just pour some syrup
on the problem, make it go away
everything would be restored
 to perfection
and yet,
there is so much left
to do.
It seems the whole world
is broken.

Taking a Backseat

In the middle of the night
we drove to a quiet place
got into the backseat and made love.
She sent me postcards from Canada
after I went back to school
 for my third year at Berkeley.
I never saw her again
 I guess it was one of those
one night stands that you remember a long
time.
Sometimes love goes its own way
we pass like ships in night, ships in night
the distance between us fades through time
and we get closer to the moments
that are endeared for us.

The Outside Coffee Table

You order a regular cup of coffee
and sit outside next to a man
with an accent from Ethiopia.
He plays chess with another man.
You gave up smoking over a year ago.
It was like a great victory
finally challenging yourself
to be a better person.
It was not so easy to do
You tried year after year
and it seemed almost impossible
until finally you suffered through the changes
you have to admit to yourself
that it feels better
to live without cigarettes
all the glamour of killing yourself is gone.

The Intimacy of Strangers

Love is a thousand years from here
I did not have such an amazing
love life after my thirties
it seems as if I gave up
on romantic relationships altogether
feeling like the next one
had to be something big.
It had to be eternal and perfect
so it never really arrived
I was pretty much
stuck with myself,
my loneliness
waiting for simple
love
to arrive.

The Significance of Power

“Power”, he said waving a cigarette in the air,
“Is something I would never want.”

I looked around at the place, the oven on the fritz
The landlord, he said, would come soon, complain
About all the money it would take to fix the thing.
I offered to buy his family a pizza for dinner
And they lit up like christmas trees, the thought
Of having food for the first time in two days.
He had been struggling with heroin for more than forty years
And he said that quitting this next time was going to kill him for sure
And in the end, I think it did.

Ahmet loved America. He came from Istanbul in his twenties,

Wanted to be a jazz composer and we both
played piano
And smoked together.
He met his wife in Berkeley when I was a
college student there
And we all moved to Los Angeles.

I got a job in a law office and he got a job as a
taxi dispatcher.
When 911 happened he was accused of being
a Muslim terrorist
And fired the day after the event.

So there was not a great deal to talk about
during the pizza
But the one thing that I always appreciated
about Ahmet
Was that no matter how poor he was, he never
ceased
To laugh.

As the Days Go By

Freedom is often noumenal I think
Going unperceived by the human experience
The bars of the jail, the walls closing in
Feeling like you are living, breathing in a box,
Makes you come to terms with it.

I think when you are eating popcorn at the

movies

You have little understanding of the nature of
freedom

Or what it means to us as Americans, how
little we

Preoccupy ourselves with the one thing that is
so important

To each and every one of us.

Everytime I Turn Around

Breathing

Listening

Feeling

The impenetrable facade of youth

Wasting away at me

Looking through the distance without grief

Trying to change the world
My father would say
You can't change the world
You can only change yourself

So why bother
To worry about the world?

Does the world
Worry about you?

Change Comes Over Us

When we are young
We never
notice the time
moving
Beyond us.
Time is a habit,
Krishnamurti speaks.

We have to face
the eternal reality
and understand
That past present and future
are all the same thing.

The Least of It

There is an old expression
About how people only tell you
Half the story
Tell me the least of it
I want to know
All the parts
You feel

You want to leave out
I want to know
The ins and outs
The details
That aren't so beautiful
The mystifying
The part
That is hard to listen to
I want to know
All those effortless
Claims
Moving back and forth
Between human dignity
And misunderstanding
The surreal plots
That man contrives
Against himself
For the benefit of no one
I want to know

Time, Endless Time

The unspeakable
Drama of age
Time dancing upon us
Like the glowing leaves
Of forgotten summers
Those misbegotten strangers

Who enter our lives
Coming and going
The resonance of learning
 Constant struggles
Between people
I do not always comport myself
 To the trivial aspects of
Time

But it speaks to me regardless
 In strange ways sometimes
Dancing through the heart of strangers
Incipient, colluding, distracting, arranging
The nuances of chance
 Interwoven
With the heartaches of present time
 That project themselves
Into future ones

I am always at the center of my own self
 Trying to recognize my needs
They seem to haunt me
 In unseen ways
Jazz of Blue Moons

 The walls are stone
Sometimes I scream
 The claustrophobia kicks in
There is nothing I can do
 To breathe
In the small empty room
My roommate killed someone
He reads the bible during the day
Trying to find salvation
I trade peanut butter for cookies

We watch television in the afternoons
Everyone has tattoos but me
They come around with pills
Near the end of the evening
They give out extra cookies
So I take them
I write on the back of lunch bags
The prison guards take them
My life is receding into age
I think of the girls
I left behind
Maybe one day
I will see a sign
Of love
In a loveless world

The First Day of Spring

When I was finally released from jail
The sky cleared from a hard rain
Back to an edgeless sky of drama
Without clouds, filled with heat
The roads to rehab filled with cars
We stopped for cigarettes
I hadn't smoked in three months
The new room was nice

A few young roommates
I was happy to be someplace else
Anywhere but LA County jail
The judge made me swear not to smoke grass
I told him it was ok I wouldn't smoke
He said alright you can go, for now

End of A Long Weekend

I went to the market
And bought a bunch of junk
Potato chips
Cookies, ice cream
Soda pop
I never seem to get enough
Junk food

I eat ice cream at night
Cookies in the afternoon
Drink soda all day long

The Skid Row Saints

Haggard sullen faces amidst cardboard
boxes made into homes
The parking lot at night filled with junkies
In the morning, lines for fried chicken
Some sleep with blankets in the midst of
sidewalks
Leading to the retail stores, the courthouse,
other places

Their own story lost to them
In the oblivion of darkness that has filled
their lives
With the indistinct value of homelessness
They lose sense of themselves
Jealousy and rage fill their hearts or
disappear, it's
One way or the other
And it's hard to tell
One from the other
Their eyes gleaming in the teamed up
streets of dawn
Reckless and abandoned by

The captors
Of industry and time
That know no limit
To the seduction of money
And they have lost sense of that too.

Implicit Response

My underwear is missing
Someone took it out of the hamper

The house is crowded with people
We have a one a.m curfew
Sometimes I wonder
If a military state
Would be easier.

I kid myself
Going back to France
I don't even speak French

We go to the movies
It's three hours long
Cartoon characters
Battling monsters

I order new underwear
Save the date on the calendar
For when it arrives
Maybe I'll throw a party.

Jealousy and the Rain of Lover's

Madness is like a spell in passion
Don't let yourself sink into it

Don't give yourself away
To a person
Who would rather be shopping

There is a madness to jealousy
And a madness to rage
It lingers in the smoked filled pubs
Waiting to erupt
I stay out of them these days

The world can be an empty place
When you are alone
Try to find a lover
Try to fall in love
Try and find someone true
And never give in
To the jealousies
That linger like the smoke
Of smoke filled rooms

Sadness Fills the Room

Those desolate places
All those halfway houses and rehabs

Where they wanted me to
Kick the habit
 Live a new life
I went through one at a time
Wondering
When the world could accept me
 For who I am
 Not what they wanted
 The world to be like

Sadness fills the room like
 Darkness in the evening
The sun coming down
And night putting the sky
 At ease

A guy picks up a cup of coffee
 Next to me
 He's trembling
Detoxing from alcohol
We laugh
At the sadness
 We don't let it get to us
We talk about it
Like an old friend

Somewhere, Anywhere
as long as we're on the Rue De Haute

I smell the flowers like the wine now
they come to me in the morning
breathing color, life into the soul of me
expressing my joy, the unlimited routes
to which I am, receding the signs before
the Rue De Haute says to me certainly

this is the place, I'll feel her in my hands
this is the place, I'll touch her right here
I'll wonder what is love across this flowered
field, and field as I betrayed it

maybe she'll cry to me after killing someone
expecting forgiveness
or meek in the disaster
want to see my rage
as it disappears
into
flowers

if she can keep her hand in mine
through the marigolds without whispering
love has no name

it might be that easy

Blue Subway Car Girl

you go there

out somewhere
your pill bottom hat
the one with the string
attached

Don't Do It

a lesson to the wise
a lesson to the foolish
the same thing

I come around the edge of the page too fast
like I know about my youth

the one lie
of the one truth
that exists

as two

I'm Going Somewhere

The phone rings
I'm on my way out
There's always something to do
Someone who has to get left behind
Like Aeneas carrying his father
On his shoulders
After the Trojan War

Blackout Days of Emptiness

Love is going

To thrill your mind
You'll see him at a cafe
Or wandering through the park
You'll see her
In her summer print dress
Or on her way home from work
Why not take the time
To stop
And say hello
Hello to love
There is always that menacing suggestion
Like
Someone's feelings are going to get hurt
Don't let it bother you
It is better to have loved than lost
Right?

Now Finish my Sentence

The electric chair of groove

Is that Saturday night
At the typewriter
With a bag of chips
And your notes
Spread out before you
The empty oblivion
Of change
Riding into the wind
Like a sparrow crossing the highway
Or the interchange of looks
Between new lovers
It has to be that way
I impart to you
A knowledge
I know nothing of

Happiness is a Virtue

Your dirty stinking mind again

Got you into this
Sit down and relax
Have a drink of lemonade
Get to know yourself
A little better
This is going to be a long ride
Poetry

Adieu My Love

I'm leaving this note
To say I love you
That I never even cared
About the money
Or anything else
I just wanted to find you
There
Sitting at your desk
Smiling
So I could enter with a cheap smile
And get a glimpse of you
For a moment in time
Before I
Disappear

It's Getting Cold Outside

Clouds moving
Like a reign of terror
Across the sky
Moving along avenues
I stop and catch my breath
Everything is cold
The light pole is cold
The sidewalk is cold
Cold sips of coca cola
In the afternoon
Just make it a little colder
I'm trying to see myself through this
Listening to myself again
Trying to figure out what I want
The deep solitude of reasoning
As I search
For the sanity within myself
To move beyond the craziness
That is everywhere
Sounds of passing cars
Craziness
Feet moving along the hardwood floor
More craziness
Everything crazy
The sun sinking below the sea
Appearing again tomorrow
Craziness
Afternoon Lazy

I ate a plate of chicken,
took a nap,
watched the basketball game
The listless hours dissolved
into nightfall
I ate ice cream in the dark
the smell of floor cleaner

From the other room
I'm told that air is ancient
like the firmament
I smoke a cigarette
tell myself it's time to quit
get to bed early
trying to forget myself
in words

Ghosts of Hollywood

They say there are ghosts in Hollywood

I have never seen any
but there are all kinds of stories
Marilyn comes out at night
in the kitchen of the Roosevelt Hotel
and says goodnight to a dishwasher
a famous director steals scissors from
aspiring cameraman in the lobby
of a commercial building
everywhere you turn
people have stories
I don't know what to believe.

Lost In Sadness

You find sadness
All over the streets
People immersed
In the slow, methodical
Collision of time
Wearing them thin
Of their own abilities
Looking vulnerable
And complete
Or incomplete
Depending how long
They have lived with the sadness
Driving them along
Plundered of reserve
Trying hard
To spark the gift of life
From the grasp of erosion
And solace

Tell Me Now

Memories seem to sift
From the long edge of time
Imbued with the delicate nourishment
Of the past
Clinging to survivors

I have known
That time speaks
In silent ways

I have seen the deserted faces
Of men
Trampled by legions of gospel
Ruined soldiers
Who forgot
Themselves
In battle

I'm Almost Sad

I can't get rid of myself

Run down dark alleys
Trying to lose my shadow

Float through the streets at dawn
Trying to awaken my soul

I see a great light
When I close my eyes

I decide to rent the earth to martians, cheat
them in the deal
Offer a discount rate, then go
To a ballgame, drink beer
Have a hot dog and think
I'm almost sad

The Void of Darkness

At night
 When the moon is full
I stand in a parking lot
Watching the stars move
 Beyond me
The void of time
Like an aging beauty queen
 Turning into an old lady
I wonder how old
the moon is

Those Gone Days

When we are young
Life is an open book
The pages turning
Like seasons of a dance
We recite ourselves
The people we choose to become
Each one of us knowing
And not knowing
What the future brings
From our growing hearts

The Last Time

Calamity hides in my closet
Breathing deep at night
Creaking the door open
To watch me when I sleep
Calamity paces the room
While I'm at the market
Streaks down the street
Whenever I close my eyes
Makes the headlines
With one tragedy after another
There's nothing I can do about it

Born to Sing the Blues

Billie Holiday on smokey filled nights
Playing sweetly on the radio
Reminding me
Of a past
Beyond my years
I can feel
Like time
Is a choice
We enter
Like a door
But I will emerge
The same
As before
only touched
By her music

I'm Telling Myself

God knows I've tried
I say to myself
Everytime
I feel
I fail myself, I think
At times
Smoking too much
Ignoring every sign of age
There is a child in me
That still wants to play
I can't reconcile
The years
With every failure
I just try
To forget them

Scorpio in Retrograde

I'm weary

Out of energy
Can't fall asleep
The world turns
I listen to parrots
Clambering in the backyard
I eat cereal
In the morning
Wondering
What the day will bring
The hours move
Fruitlessly forward
Days turn into nights
Turn into days
I'm aware
But don't know it
It's all I can do
To forgive myself
Just sitting still

Moral Conflict

Nations fight
Against
Other Nations
The people of my town
Never seem to notice
Everything just goes on
One day after another
Shopping at the market
A day at the library
Everything is always quiet
The morality
Was never a conflict
Until we
Began to run out of gas

The paper comes for free
Advertising everything
From sex to theater
I don't know what to believe
Anymore, except for the forest fires
That blaze their way across mountains
Destroying homes

I lapse
At the vision
Of news
It's never good

Birds on a Wire

The hummingbird
Flutters about
Sucking flowers
A symphony of sparrows
I could listen to this
All day

When Words Fail

She was blonde, beautiful
Walking her dog
I wanted to say hello
Maybe, let's go somewhere
Get a drink, get to
Know each other
But I couldn't stop
Staring at my shoes
And sitting alone

Where is Shakespeare?

In a small cafe
At Sur la Mer,
I waited with a cup of coffee
There was a giant
Red rose across the cobblestone streets
I thought it looked like
Four hundred years old
And I wondered
Where is Shakespeare

My Eyes Transfixed

Trying to be aware of myself
Tibetan bells ringing
In the music of my soul
The depths of Apollo's anger
Like so many arrows flying
Sounds of people clambering
In the distance. Thought dissolves
I am aware of the time moving
Beyond me, leaving me to wonder
Of the spectacle of life
Easy going feelings of youth
Reawaken with old photographs

I am Here

I am here
Here I am
The L.A. city streets at dusk
People crowding into restaurants
Saying goodbye to one another
On busy street corners

I think about the past,
Memories of my brother,
Mother, sister, father
Haunt me in the idea
Of leaving again for Europe
Where I find myself in unknown places

I want to reach out
Shake myself
Tell me that the time
Is of no consequence
That however time is fleeting
It is also said to be repeating
I close my eyes
Melting into
The concrete jungle

Lonely Roads, Empty Streets

Billboard of Godzilla spitting flames
Homeless woman with a blanket
Crossing the boulevard
Sun sinking into the sea
I have a coffee and pie
After dinner, do some meditation
Try to tell myself
It's just another day

Laugh

I laugh
The train is coming
I'm at the ticket
Only a matter of minutes
Before the train comes and goes
I arrive, only
 At the wrong platform
The train is on its way
Without me. I laugh
There will always be
 Another train

I want to be old
And take one of those luxury cruises
Where I can play shuffleboard
Relax, have a drink,
Forget my worries
Maybe take the boat
To Mexico
Where I can hear
Mariachi Bands
Playing in the hot sun
What a life
Where do I buy
The tickets

Memories of Youth

Just when you begin to feel old
Those memories arise
Selling lemonade on the corner
Playing little league baseball
Graduating high school
Those visions return
In the silent moments
You can't decide what to do
You think to yourself
What would I have thought
Back then?

I'm Going

We don't have a reservation

The desk clerk yells firmly
I turn around suddenly and hurl a chair
Across the room, the police are called
I tell them it isn't fair
They ask me for identification
I tell them that it's alright now
I'm calm, everything is ok
Don't worry, I'm going

Climbing the Ladder

When we are young
We have dreams
Of the future
How we are going to live out life
What will the world be like
When I am older
Not that I don't feel old now
But where did the ladder go?
Sometimes the future seems
Elusive to me, like the
Three of hearts pulled
From the middle of the deck
And missing.

Soft Landings

The chair inside
Is a good one
Plush velvet green
Makes me feel
Like I'm either
In a movie
Or at one
Sometimes, the way things are going
I can't tell the difference
What does it matter
The poem will vindicate me
In a thousand years or more

The Florida Sunshine

The monsoon season came and the power
Was out in the apartment for two weeks
The market looked like Armageddon,
All those empty shelves and barely
Anything left. I watched the birds fly by
And sat at the cafe with
Carmine and George, two old men
From New York City, both retired.

We enjoyed each other's conversation
And Carmine, 92 years old
Flirted with all the young girls
He laughed a lot

We laughed a lot
Until Carmine died
I moved back to Los Angeles

What's the Matter

Everytime I turn around
Another moment escapes me
They leave through doors
With smiling faces, exonerated
Feeling sublime with
Pocket change
The moment goes on vacation
Shows me pictures of Hawaii
Invites me there at discount rates
The moment strands me in Hollywood,
I feel my face in the
Mirror of an old Hotel
I want to know all the time
Where the moment goes

Train Station

All the cab drivers
Wait by the door
Smoking cigarettes
Talking amongst themselves
While travelers
Move in and out of the station
With their bags and smiles
Happy to have arrived

This is the Life

Almost there
The sun sinks
Into the horizon
Clouds covering
Open sky
Pillows in the air
Majestic, forthright
Owning nothing
But the light

Roadside Diner

The clutch of the car
Goes out, middle of nowhere
And I guess I'm stuck
At the roadside diner.

There's a hotel
Next door, the mechanic
Tows the car. The part
Will take a day to arrive
So I spend my time
Waiting at the diner.

I'm Awake Now

The spirit shares a chamber
In the body with the soul
One is from the father
One is of God
We are all righteous
We are all wicked
Somewhere a median exists
As a balance we must find
Inside the human heart
It's a journey we take
Into ourselves, our needs,
Our wants, we're not supposed to
Want for anything
But the truth is we do.

The Farthest Reaches

Oblivion, despair,
Anger, hostility
The restless feeling
You get in the rain
They come and go
Bringing the stars and planets
Along with them
We search for comfort
From strangers
And become unknown
To ourselves

I imagine times in the past
Images of years ago
Appear in pictures of myself
I'm eating birthday cake
For my sixth birthday
I'm saying hello
My first day of kindergarten
Images and visions of the past
Memories appear before me
Reminding me of my father
Who died years ago

He talks to me with his eyes
And still the trembling vision of time
Is right before me

Planets Revolving

The sun ruled by Leo
The moon of cancer
Sky filled with tears of rain
The wind breathtaking and cold
I feel old on some days
 Waiting around the city streets
 Wondering where the time goes
 It gets to me, the silences and
Distance, today I saw a hawk
Swirling through the trees
While a hummingbird came next to me
The rain stopped, the clouds lifted
O sole mio

A Dark and Dreary Room

The room lights up
With the bright
Hopeful faces
Of the alcoholics
Who have come together
To share their lives
In the evening
Somewhere, I imagine
An alcoholic didn't make it here
And is busy dying
Alone

What Do You Feel?

It seems so hard
Trying to understand
One another
Everyone on a computer
Trying to envision life
On a screen
I want to be free
And for people
To start
Relating
To one
Another.

We Search for Words

There is a darkness in us

Just as much as there is light
I put my glasses on the table
I can't read with them
They help me see things
Far away
My soul is illuminated
Desire and fantasy intermingle
Like they are drinking
At a cocktail party
One says to the other
I'm tired of this
The other replies
Let's go to bed

Beginning

To understand

The difference
Between love and death
Future and past
The world revolving
Our lives intersect
I think
In ways we cannot know
Fortune tellers throwing cards
Astrologers who see the skies
But what is in our future
Then the love we make
today

Monday Morning

The alarm clock vibrates

On the side of my bed
It goes on and on for about ten minutes
Then, ah the alarm clock is ringing
I guess I better get up
I've got crepe mix waiting downstairs
But the syrup has been misplaced
So I'm searching the kitchen
Like a frenzied animal,
Where is my syrup?
So I eat without it,
Then find it later
Must be Monday morning

The Clock Strikes Two

I don't know where I am
The unfamiliarity
Of a new place
The lobby is nice.
They have a coffee machine
So I make a cup.
There's a television on the wall
A receptionist at the desk
He isn't here yet
He'll be here any minute
Any second, another introduction
Another job interview,
Seems like I've done this a thousand times
I'm almost fifty four now
In and out of these office buildings
For over thirty years
Who said it pays to be honest
God I wonder

I'm Almost There

You can't be too sure
When you go to a party
Don't want to be the first to arrive
Don't want to be the last to leave

Anyways, I don't get out much anymore
When I was a small boy
My father and mother took us
To all the Hollywood parties.

Inevitably, I would fall asleep on the couch
And my father would say on the way home
"I wanted to do that"
And I'd laugh, laugh and laugh

How many times
I've awakened
Wondering what day it is

When I was a boy
I was first thing up in the shower
Now I need a cup of coffee
Just to get my eyes dilated
Fumble around for my glasses
Find a new pair of underwear
Some washed pants and socks
Tell myself I might as well
Get up, face the day, swim
Into all that blues again

How Completely Indifferent

You lost yourself on the street
He went into the department store
To buy a hat
Or he left the movies early
Because he was bored with it
Or he bought an ice cream tub at the market
Then you turn around
And find yourself again
Reaching out to people
Who will never understand you
Why bother anyway

Learn to Love Yourself

We are only
On the earth
So long
We have to learn
Not to get swept away
By disappointment, loss
Sometimes plans go bad
We get carried away
With the world
It isn't easy
Living alone, or with others
We have to try everyday
To make the best of things

We grow up
Become different people

Our body changes
Hair from brown to grey
Our made up minds
Are changed
From different life experiences
We move in different ways
Our bodies change
We call it aging
It happens to everyone

Spoken Words

We hurt each other
All the things
We say
And do not mean
Why try so hard
To pick each other apart
It's easy when you try
Finding fault with others
Isn't any easier
Then having something nice to say

The Fortress of the Mind

We try to keep our mind intact
Taking vitamins, exercise
It's all we can do not to worry
The world has its way with us
It's hard to define the past from the present
We only know of senescence
And the way it feels
To live and die

These Days

Going are the motions and stillness

Into bewildered hearts, star crossed lovers
The multiplicity of circles surround us
Ever awaiting the neutral darkness
All consuming is the time and the age
Of light remembering itself in the morning
As the sun lifts from the horizon
A memory of yesterday appears before itself

The calamity of each new gone day
Passing beyond us in the desperate search
For tomorrow

I am afraid, says the sun to the sky
That in the newness of age
I will forget the meaning
Of the time

Sometimes

There is an ebb and flow to life
Things come and go
We think that life is in our fingers
And it slips from our grasp
When we are not vigilant
We need to protect ourselves
From the incongruities
And remain calm in adversity
Otherwise, what choice do we have?

Sunshine

Those days of laughter
Following along
Like a yellow swallowtail
Birds singing beyond
The fences
Cars moving slowly
There are so many feelings
One could hold onto
In a day of sunshine

Feelings

Feelings corrupt us, our mind tells us things
Reality is another place
From where our mind travels
We have to trust our feelings
We never know
Where they can take us

The Cold Ensemble

Bix Biederbeck plays in the distance
Drinks flow from the bar
People laughing, mistaken, introducing each
other
The clouds cold with the rain
Come in June
I see faces in the restaurants
Beyond the city streets
People holding their lives together
In the brief intermingling
Like a seance to ghosts
They plunge into their drinks
And forget themselves
Lost in the reverie of time
Where stillness has no motion
And they become like fixtures
The clouds, the people
The cold

The hummingbird
Flutters about
Seeking flowers
The blue jay arrives
A symphony of sparrows
I could listen to this
All day.

When Words Fail

She was blonde, beautiful
Walking her dog
I wanted to say hello
Maybe, let's go somewhere
Get a drink, get to
Know each other
But I couldn't stop
Staring at my shoes
And sitting alone
I was alone to myself in those days
California turned cold
After years of heat
I wanted to forget myself in Normandy
And left for years
Only to arrive and wind up
In jail.

I am here and
Here I am
The LA City streets at dusk
People crowding into restaurants
Saying goodbye to each other
On busy street corners
I think about the past,
Memories of my brother,
Mother, father, sister
Haunt me in the idea
Of leaving again
For Europe,
Where I can find myself
In unknown places

I Want to Reach Out
Shake myself
Tell me that the time
Is of no consequence
That forever time is fleeting
It is also said to be repeating
I close my eyes
 Melting into
The concrete jungle

Lonely Days, Empty Streets

Billboard of Godzilla spitting flames
Homeless woman with a blanket
Crossing the boulevard
Sun sinking low into the sea
I have coffee and pie
After dinner, do some meditation
Try to tell myself
It's just another day

I Feel Undecided

Everything can be bought and sold
The world is infinitely available
To us.
I look for work everyday
And no responses.
I wonder what it's like
Living free from guilt and shame
I eat dinner
And get the hiccups
Maybe some coffee will help

Fading Out

You grow up
Graduate high school
Go to college
Learn to live
With or without drugs
Sometimes they haunt you
Others are seemingly immune
They learn about it
But it doesn't wreck their lives
I wish I was
One of those

I Don't Know What to Think

It's funny
How television
Bends the mind
Telling us
How to think
How to feel
The whole world
Seems to transit
Through the empty screen
Of television

The Sonnets We Sing

Our mind and body
Are just an illusion
We struggle and need
Life becomes us,
Everything we do
Becomes a simple memory
We suffer and agonize
Over big things, small things
We have to bear in mind
Everything changes
And there are always
Second chances

We become the people
We want to become
Growing up rich, poor
Shaped by our parents and friends
It seems everything defines us,

The news we watch,
Television, movies, radio and song

So many things
Enter our
Conscious effort
To become ourselves

Sometimes we grow up
And don't like ourselves
We can't be afraid to change

I went to the movies
Just after dinner
An old deli in the middle of town
So many memories
With the whole family
Ordering pastrami sandwiches
Scrambled eggs, orange juice
Thoughts of all those years
Now we are sitting there
Just my mother and I
With two of her friends
After all this time
They are moving the place
Down the street.

Blossoms of summer flowers
Flowing through the streets
Leave me mesmerized by the potential
Of nature that exists
All around us
The machine eyes of headlights
Moving along the highways
As I go, I wonder if
The planets of Jupiter
And the cold ice of Neptune
As constellations appear in the
Night sky.

Home Town Blues, June 7th, 2019

Ahmet died on this day
Three years ago.
I'm walking the familiar streets again
Stopping in for coffee, all the pretty girls
Nothing can change my mind
About how much I miss him.
I think of times
Of laughter, better times
When we were not afraid
To feel like ourselves
Before the world exchanged him
For a ghost, sitting at my side.
I call his wife and son
Looking for solace
No one answers
 It feels like a part of me
Is gone, that I am worlds away
From the streets of
My childhood.
Out of my element, I guess
But not too far away
 To have resounding memories
Of his laughter
And what these streets were like forty years
ago.
All these down days
Laughing at the world with you
Fifty cents in our pockets
Our friendship made us rich
 Even in quiet
Places of meditation
I searched for your memory
At night, reciting Kaddish
To remember your soul
To heaven.

Thinking Twice

A Path of roses
Where I sit
Quietly remembering
A million reasons why
We fail each other
And ourselves
The sun screams out
Wandering for peace,
Tossed in drama
Blending reality with illusion
Time with space

Creation and Destruction

We hold onto the ideas
Letting go of the past
Believing each other
Our only salvation

Sight Unscene

The regular way transaction
Between political drama and terror
Isolated incidences of mass shootings
Becoming more and more frequent
Homelessness, divorce, bankruptcy
All these depressing events
In our lives, leaving us
Hopeless
Don't forget
To smile

Fascination of Circuits

The robot mind advancing
Into the darkness of mystery
Truly explicit dawn uncovers
New days of technological epoch
The rhyme less afternoons of
Afterthought, flowing away
From simple language, truth
Human cruelty juxtaposed
To the sinister machine

Into the mist

The course of time has no circles

We are aware of ourselves

Just as we are aware of others

Sometimes, less so.

We have to hold on to ourselves

Give us the time to pray, heal, sleep

Everyday we awaken

To a new dimension of time

But the hours and the minutes

Are the same, like a minuet

Of a dance, a dance of

Strangers, that keeps us

In memory

Torrent of Rain

It rained this morning
And I put on my jacket
Went outside, feeling the water
It had been a long time since
Any rain had fallen in this town
And leaves were moving
Through channels of water
On the concrete path of the driveway
I thought we were in the middle
Of a drought, I wondered
To myself
And went inside
To eat breakfast

Feeling Comfortable

Sometimes we harbor resentments
That keep us sad, angry, depressed
We have to overcome ourselves
Because we are our own worst enemy
We have to let go of the idea
That our past is catching up to
Our future
It may reach us in the present
But only if we choose to remember
And we have to let go of it
So that we can live free
Without resentment

What do you Feel?

It seems so hard
Trying to understand
One another
Everyone on a computer
Trying to envision life
On a screen
I want to be free
And for people
To start
Relating
To one
Another.

Illusion of Time

“Secondary sources confirm”

The news is on at five

Old Jimi Hendrix albums burning

In a studio fire, a police

Officer dies at a fast food place

Baby left in hundred degree car

All the world is weaving stories

Electric, powerful, easygoing

I wonder where I am, lost

In a prison of the mind

Wondering where the time goes

Reality Drifts

I want to go out
Eat a hamburger
Talk to strangers
Rearrange my life
I want to eat
A bucket of ice cream
Watch tv, forget the past
I want to drink wine
Moderately, without lapsing
Into a socially defined
Cataclysm.

Jack in the Box Blues

8 am bus ride through West Los Angeles
A bunch of Russian girls,
A Chinese student, an old guy
With a walker, we're headed South
On the way, stop at Jack in the Box
Hungry for breakfast sandwich and coffee
Remind the counter girl to
Open the bathroom door
Sunrise over the Hollywood Hills
Making myself comfortable
In a plastic chair
Sipping coffee

As Pleasant as this Sounds

Morning arrives
Fresh and beautiful
I have a strawberry yogurt
And half a cup of coffee
We are on the road
a little after eight
The day goes by
Uneventfully
I feel bewildered, trapped
I don't know what to write
It just so happens to be Tuesday

The Mind Races

Don't be confused
About your thoughts
They are your own
And you own them
Some say the mind races
Others think slower
I don't know which is better
I think
Everyone
Should be valued
For their ideas.

Turn Around and Face the Wall

I got arrested in October
I was sleeping on the streets again
And a young man came up to me
Told me some guys were chasing me
So I threw a rock into a window
Of a nearby house
And waited for the police to arrive
They were there in a matter of minutes
Beats getting chased by a bunch of guys, I
thought
As they put the handcuffs on
And took me down to the station

America

These are men without faces
And eyes that see from
Everywhere. These are women
With no voices and a silence
Imposed upon the impression
Of the world.

These are children who may
Grow up to believe television
And radio before their own
Parents.

This is a desolate place
Whose freedom has locked us into menial
cages

Little Wisps of Tears

I call myself names
And tell me that it
Ain't the truth
You can go places
And see things
You can stay at home
Drink beer and smoke
It's all the same to me

I never understand people
Who can't get comfortable
Just being in a conversation
It seems like I'm having
One with myself again,
Or is it the moon?

The Right Time

Protests in Hong Kong fill the streets
an explosion underground sends manhole
covers
soaring into the downtown L.A. air.
What is the right time
for the face of reason?
How many quiet hours slowly
drift by?

Rosy lips of dawn
Arrive
In the silence of morning
Silence permeates the battlefield
A drone is shot down

The cry for war
Silenced and dimming
As the chances
Elevate
I wonder
What a million young men
Will do in a desert
Other than
Die?

The Christmas Guy

or

When They Come for Santa

It starts off in their yellow shoes with
popsicles dreaming
the blurry vision of darkness before me,
Auschwitz, starvation
Normandy, coming to me in their wheelchairs
and balloons sending
more rounds of silence from the empty halls of
the Court
their mouths wide open and taking it while a
million children
in tangent swallowed their tears and the latest
zodiak nine capsule from
the Clemencie pharmaceutical company,
offering a lifetime commitment
to tears and morbid fascination with ruin, a
cult of transcendent living
ideal, only a Superbowl commercial away, four
hundred million dollars
for thirty seconds of "What he say, Verne, pass
me a Budweiser" speaking to
us of their broken, poor impoverished souls
wandering away into
the darkness mystified.

Pantomime of Jesters

They say we are lost souls
Who have forgotten our way,
Telling us where to go,
What to do, what to think
Those of us confused enough
To think for ourselves
Were labeled insane
Our lives stacked on bookshelves
In legal size manilla envelopes
the guys from Manila,
they arrived with feathers and passports
for new jobs, a suit and tie
to get out of their gorilla suits
sit down from a jungle
and sip coffee

The Blackout Mode

New York room spinning youth
Of blond beating time backwards
Brow beaten brown derby dreams
Downtown and wondering, statue of
Beethoven, clergy coming with final baloney
sandwiches
New briefcase train officer stolen
Time of new advancing properties
And perfect bullshit of Vatican flames
Police lights and call girls,
The livid dream of plots, Plutarch
And otherwise last seen in clover
Song of cartoons and breathing

Plan for the Future

Make up your day
As you go along
With your own idea
Of what to believe
Try not to let others
Fail you, try to give
Them the time they need
To accomplish things
For themselves

Liturgy of Drunks

Barely breathing their way
Through erotic signs of
Police car flashing
In off moments
Violations of wine, women, sex
Cigarettes, ass and blondes
Showers, sweat, fast cars moving forward
Against tide of rationed epidemics,
Reflective into sand
Swallowing infinite futures of infant cultures
Civilizations, generations

Requit La

I am the return of
Verse in the song
What belongs to the mist
I am the lore of adore from before at illumined

Unsung (tell the villain key loot
for the royal service
of the vision)

Looks

The only empty voice
Of reason exists
Beyond the unknown

Into the prized possessions
Of our only times
Together.

Back of the Line

We trusted you to be of service
We asked you to be respectful
To the objections and duties
of others

We told you that life is worth
Living everyday, on the set
Of the show

We asked you to act and never
Forget what it is you came for
In the theater money,

Not the money itself,

The prospective interests of the
People;

Softly she comes
Running and waiting and
Dancing around
What she can't lose

The Vision of Your Eyes

When I dance, I dance for free
she says to me

twisting and turning the light
hardly speaks, I'm just at the
doorway holding a bar of soap
for whoever travels down the hall

On Keeping an Even Tempo

It takes concentration and forgetfulness
both at the same time, you have to enjoy
the swing of it, but not to the point of getting
excited, are you are suddenly moving too fast
you can't get sad about having to play it for
hours
when its reggae, because the rastas like it like
that
thump,thump,thump diddy dump, thump
thump
and with the skank, it goes all day
and you have to keep with it, thump, thump
like the bleeding hearts of rastas when they
run
out of dope, sad, miserable, ready to play any
venue
for a smoke.

The Most Fabulous Day

She's got a chicken jalopeno jukebox
that spits out chocolate pie and squeeze
nuts if you have a dollar and they line up to
put money into it and sometimes the guy has
to come and put more in, I think he must have
a lot of chocolate bars in the back of his car, I
swear to myself wondering as he checks the
lock of the key and he has like fifty more to do,
I can tell, by the big round of keys
he has in his pockets.

LINSKY'S HOUSE

Let's just say, it's a place
you remember forever,
without or without the monsters inside.

Linsky said when you use you let the monsters
out,
and I can
only guess
that's every delegate
of the Soviet Union the moment
the rastafarians from across
the fence
put a twenty sack
in my hand and they have to go
find their own shit and make a political
statement.

You know what that means?

It means, find a new place right now,
you agreed to certain conditions
that were not met and wait, wait,

I've been here two years,
Leave now,
sort of energy and from it all,

Alex is dead.

Linsky came to me
like the figure
of a brother, they said
it was the next step in my

outpatient treatment, and they
had me reeled in boy, reeled
out of the front office where
the ensigns and captains
had taken their places,
with the advocates and councilors
signing the paperwork I used to do
and the result of it all, I could no longer work.

It was a charade
beyond measure,

after twenty five years in the office,
I was too good at what I did.

Linsky would come in and check the
refrigerator, see who was loaded. I would be
typing away at the computer
and he would be looking for people, where's
Rick? Where's Justin,

where did they go, did you see them? How many minutes ago?

I was sober about five years and this new Japanese bar opens with dollar and a half sake bottles and I go crazy, two three bottles, I'm spinning, back to the car, to the three block drive up the street, then to the left, into the driveway, the front line cluttered with new sunflowers and other flowers, I had been working on the garden a long time and Heloise the cat had just died I guess.

But Alex was always was there for me and was patient beyond words, but dumb Eric had to leave a bag of grass in the drawer and go to an AA meeting. To see what he could get for it? Anyway, Alex fell in and out, out and in, but we stayed with each other, every step of the way, that warm conversation over coffee and not minding his company at all, the war stories and slipping in and out of Russian on the telephone and trying to understand what had become incomprehensible.

There was a report of citywide cat poisoning and I buried Heloise and her five or six or eleven or whatever it was children, she had bread too early and the children had died.

I'm throwing up on the toilet and go right back
to bed. In the morning,
Fauci comes in and it's breakfast time, eggs
scrambled, orange juice,
potatoes, we are blowing each other's minds
one meal after another, he's cooking the
spinach with olive oil and garlic bread
and I'm cooking the steak medium rare with
onions and everyday is the same
routine, get up, sit at the jacuzzi, play
backgammon and talk about it.

Lizards of Paz

Winding the snakes into trees
and butterflies into the flowered petals
of his dreams, Octavio painted the colors
of his Latin world before my eyes

and I danced inside the pages of his
thoughts, wondering how he saw the
creatures so small, bringing them
to life in words, feeling their presence in his
vision.

When the Battery in Their Eyes Runs Out

Mothers and Fathers complained
the light in their children's eyes had left them.
Can you imagine. The moment they walked
through the doors of the place, like some dark
sinister mind bending reckoning of rhyme and
reason, twisting the deliberations of justice
into melted cheese pizza crusts, half eaten
roast beef leftovers, old scraps of biscuits and
what could
have been warm muffins if some one had taken
the time,
they used to, take time, in older times.

The Lowliest of Men

I guess when you work at the post office
and sort mail for a living, you could become
great at anything. I wonder why you chose
poetry Bukowski, to rant and rave your
in differences to the world, shrouded in
your constant belief in love, even the bumper
on an old Chevrolet seemed to sparkle
in the hazy residual of memory you
claimed to be your memory at the time,
stepping out of bars at all hours of the
morning
just to make it back to work,

Chekov, They Say, Is Still Alive

Chekov, they say, is still alive,
alive in the hearts of men just as deep as
Pushkin, or a raving half crazed Tchaikovsky
dumping himself into the freezing Volga
determined to be finished with himself,
it never made sense to me, to be determined
in that way, you have to show yourself
strength
in arts, not let your fears run rampant and
destroy your own imagination with idealism
because the imagination is never that.

Flagrancy

Flagrant opens the door for strangers in the
perfect night of October
dreaming only of the perfect party, the red
Carlo Rossi just ready to go
for him alone, the additional dozen bottles to
stave the crowd off from
his true treasure, and can you sell the wine,
really sell it, right back
at them.

Flagrant grabs his bags of clothes, walks out
the door, declares with

the greatest of clarity, that he has no idea
where he is going.

The Cadre of Illusion

Somewhere in a simple time,
a group of men are clocking out and sitting
around a table throwing their dirty towels in a
bucket, a line of dancers sings
the car wash theme on a Broadway stage
three elephants are dribbling ink upstairs in
the big room,

dreaming of last rights for best fights,
meanwhile, long ago, in an asian broccoli

lounge, Peter Lorrie is exploring the universe,
waiting for the girl from Monte Carlo,

her lips; what they would say, reading this,
finally knowing your thoughts, her sweet

disaster arriving on the subway like a family of
shared interest in a parking lot, the

king louis xiv special, the ultimate mix up of
erotic blends and detail, just enough to

make the judge get up from his desk and
suddenly fall under a complete spell, before

sitting down and trying to remember
who he is.

Herein lies the whole truth the whole
truth and nothing but the truth,
as long as I'm lying, as they say, in the
narrative,
otherwise believe me, it isn't, in fact
I make so much of it as I go along,

I cannot even defend myself.

Anyways, welcome to the cadre of illusion,
if you are reading this you are
either buzzed or in trouble,

which is worse is a decision left to Church and
State

Listen to This

You and the mechanic bend over the
hood of the yellow car
it looks like a taxi and sometimes people
wave at you to stop the car because they want
to pay you for a ride

anyways, the mechanic here the click
click click of the engine

decides it's the water pump, tries to tell
you it might be two or three days, who can
tell, nowadays maybe even a week
he has to order the part and he will call
me in the next few hours
to let me in on how many days it will
take.

I need change for the busride back to
work and head into
the Bank of America on Fairfax and
Beverly Blvd, just a block
down from where Carlos the mechanic is
working on my car.

The bus is going to be a while so I decide
to walk to the next stop
and I have to pass all the old deli's and
dream of the breakfast
I wanted to splurge on before me it was
going to be
twelve hundred dollars.

Backwards Isn't So Simple

You let go

go, of the idea, that things
things could have gone a whole
lot easier, with basic
human understanding

you ring your pain out
like old laundry
clinging to the silences
between words
the reactions, the emotions
the tender conciliations
everything that
gets in the way of your
next thought
and whatever
used to make sense to you
no longer does
except

the sound of the music
is the same.

The Total Goal of Zero

You sit at the desk
count your change

maybe fourteen dollars or so
you make a list

of things you need
from the market tomorrow,
cheese, crackers, pasta, milk
the same old everyday stuff
nothing has changed
except the beer
is cheaper.

You Made Your Choice Long Ago

You wanted to write
the words on paper

that would carry through
the rivers of time

the images you saw in your mind
people and faces, memories of golden
Dupar's pancakes in the morning

before going to the Amusement Park
every time you stop and see something
unusual
you think to yourself
what will I explain to myself about this?

Then the words arrive

upside down, the end of trashcans final
journey
for an old newspaper, or the can of an
old sodapop
suddenly appearing in the middle of a
row of treetops
making you want to forget people
who would leave this here?

What I Have Known

The glow of warm

fireplaces of Christmas
clink of glasses, toast
friendly loving friends
bringing holiday gifts
smiles and laughter
so many lucky days
that swept away whatever fears
engulfed us at the loss of my
father.

Swallowed up in a sea of rage,

I try to remember
swimming in the warm pool
in summers,
the new school year, a
new notebook, pencils and clothes
a lunchbox and jacket,
everything ready
for a future
that never arrived.

I'm Not Gonna Tell You

It's funny I started this poem at 11:59

Ahmet always said he wanted to start a rock
and roll band
and call it eleven fifty nine; I asked him why
he said anything you ever plan always
happens
a minute earlier then you expected it to,
if you think the bus is coming at twelve
you'll find it leaving a minute early.

The bus is always good for a seat next
to someone carrying their grocery bags and
smiling
long rides across town and looking out over
the city
wondering where everyone will be tomorrow

Into the Beat

That Neal died frozen on the train tracks in
the middle of the night
is no answer for their desperate
predicament, or the lengths they wouldn't go
to end a fight.

The Frozen Winter of Solitude That Lasted Forever

When I think of all that revelry
in the dead heat of night

that late nacht disco dancing dream
of Berlin hotels and the Kempinsky
expanding like a balloon in the bull
of light, flowing backwards through time,
back deep
into conversations with taxi drivers and
golf course attendants,
deep into the wine of lore
that beseeched you, I grieve
and it is not grave.

Unreal Time

They say that beyond the body of illusion
there lies no mystery, I believe that. She
appeared two hundred years old, but was
the age of twenty eight

it wouldn't matter if we are too old to talk
through these trees
she said to me

I wasn't reminded of anything particular, just
the breeze of it

Caught

It's two am or something maybe midnight
I took a shower in the room, to give it that
steamy feeling,
just turned the water hot and let it pour out
the crack of
the door so they will not know, and Torrien,
the Latin singer
laughing in his bed, faking asleep, I light up
that joint and
finish it, and I've been in here three weeks
with it, I'm
a sudden genius to myself, locked up,
completely,

I head for the baloney sandwich in the
kitchen, and I get
"Hey"

and here's my new peer counselor, I guess,
my new sponsor

and I turn around and its the worst junky
poets of all of us, King Lord

of the Junkies, Kurt Cobain, in his
hospital gown and his hands

on his hip, he's suddenly nice, and I
think, we look like

two old gunslingers in a bonanza movie
Kurt, whaddya want to do now,

and he's warming up, that end of the
world I don't understand laugh

and he says "make me one, will ya"

and I laugh and head for the baloney and
there is no baloney

and good ole father Timothy is laughing
in the darkness at me,

his face is lined, caked with lines, and
now suddenly glowing in

the darkness I arrive and take my seat.

Sound of the spoon scraping the bowl,
now tinkling it.

"You know what life is about?" the voice
in the darkness says to me.

"I'll tell you what life's about. It's about
this spoon. You see, when you are addicted
to heroin you think about one thing,
putting the heat to the spoon.

Hey Baby

You lean out with your top secret known
by everyone

but still totally classified Pierre Cardin
lighter, super sleek

super refined, you said you made the
counter clerk your favorite guy in the world,
no, wait, that could be the valet guy in front of
the restaurant or the Jordanian brothers as a
combo who sell the beadies on La Cienega
before the coffee place, anyway,

your leaning again, and she's up against
the wall, her back to the concrete trapped
more or less then you, hard to tell, but she

will you already know by the sound of
her breadth, she says nice to meet you

I'm Six, I say wow I'm Four, it's Tuesday,
no wonder we met.

the clarinet player, but this is bad, very
bad, I'm thinking, if the Sicilians really loved
me at that moment....

The Quality of Years

Whose faces turned to stone

in their great leap
beyond
the infinite
horizon
of the sorrows
left behind
for the women

they loved, the men jumped
to meet death, a vision of them
battered and bruised
noses bashed in eyes closed
like blackened holes
in the death
they decided
for themselves
mouths sewn shut,
seagulls, hands, clouds
thoughts of children

under their chins
looking into a future
they could not belong to, crying
Apache tears

Why Leaving

There are things you learn
things you don't want to know

things you know and want to forget
and that seems to
spark

everyone's curiosity
you can't cry about it
those
empty

syllables of time
wits about
the place

who could ever know
how many tears

1-800 Hot Sex Debby Number

You torture yourself
sometimes
at times
with the belief

that life could be different

maybe there could be
more than this

too late to consider someone else
at a dollar per minute
she'll pick up the phone
any second

Debby answers the phone
"Hello there"
a soft sexy voice

with her headset on
at a desk

somewhere in Jersey

"What is your name?"

"Are you married?"

"What do you like to do?"

Is love so unmeasurable?
perfect she says
You want me to talk dirty?"

In the Evening

The darkness to me

saying

ancient

irreversible things
the way a child cried in torment
or an older person
struggles to walk
we get along with ourselves
or, at least we try

First Night

You found out as
It rained, or was raining
in Normandy that night
the train stopped
I found an Afghani hamburger place
plopped down my duffle bag
had a seat
waited for that burger, soda and fries
a fight broke out
someone hit someone else
a few sordid shouts
I had no idea what it was about
I finished my meal and went outside
back into the drizzling rain
I found a bus and took it
having no idea
where I was going

I ended up on a highway
and set the top of my tent up
under the seat of the bus stop
I slept there in the pouring rain
in the morning

I walked into the town of Mathieu
counted about two euros left
waited for another bus

and finally arrived in town.

Count Me Out

The radio play sweet songs
I sit at the desk
wondering
the wind outside
fierce, disturbed
it is the eleventh of December
the cold seeps into your hands
burns your ears
the people move slowly
like figures in a painting
I once saw long ago

in the galleries of my old home town
somewhere far away now
too far to remember
but the music plays
and reminds me.

Those Old Beat Giants

They still walk along the streets
of Berkeley and San Francisco

remembering the Summer of Love
the Viet Nam War, LBJ, Nixon, Kent State
guns in the streets
soldiers off to War
when I was a child

we would watch the news during dinner
they would count the bodies every night
of the men who we had lost
pictures of men running
through Saigon with stretchers,
bombs going off, bullets flying
the only thing
on anyone's mind
was when would it end

Those old Beat giants,

they still make their soup
and put together the words
to define a generation
the world may soon forget
in the agony of television
and movie theaters, computers

and alcoholics anonymous meetings

They'll Come Back Again

Esteem is a waiting game
you bid your time
hold on to it?

Precious, like, morning walks
those once so meaningful
pleasures taking you in
to conversations of the day
that lasted hours
without meaning.

Obey the Joke?

When you are young, and the
times intrigued upon you,
towards some unique destination
when the tides of time befell
you, what you know of time,
in the society of leisure, the
tailored time of persuasive
treasures, invoked with a thousand
legions of attachment

burning in the principles of our misbegotten
pleasure,
advanced with measures
of time, from Istanbul

they shackled our doors
squelching white noise
through the radio tuning
to silence the truth, advented at a Bible

One bright day, turmoil walked down Fifth
Avenue on his way to get a pizza, feeling

deducted by the click click clicking of ball
bearings in the hub of a passing tricycle

he ran to hide in the Empire State
Building
but became manically paranoid
of the elevator man in uniform,

turmoil rushed out the door, seeking
solace
not knowing where to find it, ducked into
a movie theater
paid for a bucket of popcorn, sat in the
back row
disgusted.

Signification of Rhyme

The old poets seem to dance down the street
with their books of old poems and scarves
dancing in the wind with them
speaking of the memories of times
old friends who once walked along
the very same way, tears in their eyes

inexplicable sadness, their beaten down eyes
old clothes, new friends, leaning against their
shoulders
like to rub against them would bring them
some
untold truth of a million years

then, they forget themselves, say goodbye,
turn the corner

Another Day Has Passed In Silence

Everyday another massacre
another downpour of violence
raining

upon the earth
like a disease itself
that nobody is able to treat
or unwilling to face
for the right reasons
each minute
another silence gesture
like a mime
in stripped suit
making imagery of a box

we feel trapped
and adorned

with kind words
leading us

nowhere

All the Beautiful People

You choke on little pieces of food
barely able to swallow a glass of water
they tell you

everything is as it should be
everything is perfect

the pain, it seers through you
every moment of the day
they tell you little things
you forgot this

you forgot that

you didn't do this
you are incorrect, it is this way

your muscles ache so much
you can barely understand
what it is
they are saying

they leave you two dollars
to survive on a month
call you momma's boy

the cruelty

never never
ends.

never never
ends

never never

ends

It's Like The Pain Sees

You see for yourself
what others cannot
you walk around
the rainy days

feeling the cold wind on your shoulders
breathing short breathes

losing weight
no one
dares call
ruined

thinking about
those days
long ago

you came out of the pool
your father took the towel
and dried your hair

like polishing a shoe
working it through
over and over again
why so hard? You wondered.

"They will say, his hair is still wet" he said to
me.

The Masters and Their Canes

They stroll through the courtyard
with smiles and baby carriages

talking over radios and satellites
beginning each scenario
as if in dream

the cold sardine of truth imminent and among
them
waiting for you, in the darkness of their midst

as soon as they have you
captured.

You escape into the dreary leisure of your own
doing
and they come, all hours of the night

smiles and words, measuring you up

like a whirling dirvish lost in the ice capades
show
behind a curtain of paint and sound

lounging in between numbers, drinking beer
screaming at you

about all the things you forgot to do

as the next case of beer arrives
so they can oblivate themselves
all the while, telling you what
to do.

A French Man and His Dog

In the emptiness of night
there is no greater torment
then to be alone
so he walks with him

in the gentle cold

they stroll beyond the Rue de Rivoli

the late night night trains and paper checks
beyond the Rue du Fallaise
they could be traveling anywhere

bright stars collide inside the deepest dark of
sky

Berkeley

Berkeley was fantastic
we used to sing and dance
smoke cigarettes and get high
pack our lunches and go watch
Nobel prize winning laureates

lecture about Anthropology, Economics,
Chemistry, Physics

all in a days work

between making love and reading our next
assignment
some of us got lost forever in the idea
that we would ever be able to make anything
more out of it
there were riots and protests, sit ins and
concerts
the students assembled to change the world
or change themselves depending on the day of
the week

but we never felt anything more then love for
each other

we would show up at one anothers door at four
in the morning
with a bag of dope and smoke until the
morning light
brought the sound of the San Francisco train

and the fog over the bay was crystalline and
listless
clearing in the afternoon, leaving the Golden
Gate bridge gleaming
and we enjoyed ourselves
loving one another, learning together
that was what was most important

most of the students left
at the end of their school term
and some stayed behind preferring
the atmosphere of the small town
not knowing, either way which way to turn,
left or right

losing sight of the politics
we only wanted to live together
in peace. It was a simple time in our lives.

When I Was a Child

When I was a young boy

I read Ivan Denisovich and other stories of
Solzhenitsyn
learned of the haunting resolutions of silences
that followed in regimes of totalitarianism
the far penetrating, bewildering confusion that
left these bright men in confusion and anguish
unable to reconcile what they understood of
life
and what they understood of truth,
trying to share with others the values that
had been instilled to them for generations
met with the lurid glow of silences
that followed them

everywhere.

Here I Go Again

A hot pan on the oven
to lay

a piece of bread
and make toast

silly thoughts of how I go too far
eating three of them

with the lovely cheese spread
enough for me
one last one

and I'll use the tahini sauce
just to shake up the evening
give it a little attitude

When I Come Down

I always have to check

either the desk, the bureau or the windowsill
for my wallet

with the card to the door
of the little apartment I stay

a bed, a refridgerator, a microwave and
kitchen

I roll a cigarette at the desk
this is my routine
remember my wallet
out the door
into the elevator

through the lobby, say hello

out the front door
smoke the cigarette
then,

back upstairs

Even if It's Nuts

I have to do this

it's like

a part of me
screams
to express

what I know; what I don't know, what I feel

the rain comes and goes
I walk a long way to the market
not so long

long enough to get wet when it rains
and feel the leaves crumple under my feet
as I walk along the grassy ways
at the side of the highway

sometimes, when I have extra change
I buy that slice of apple pie and ice cream

wait until the evening comes
heat it up

pour that ice cream on

enjoy myself

What Does It Matter?

I'm alone all the time
I listen to music

watch movies on the screen
watercolor and write
but most of the time
I am alone

Dinner Heats Up

The waiting game begins
the minute you drop the spaghetti
into that hot water

wait for the time to pass

listen for the tomato sauce to start
boiling
dinner will be ready
any second.

I'm Tired

All the men who think they own the world
amount to one guy carrying a rake
in the early morning
lifting the leaves out of the road

All the women who sensed a great disaster
belong together in a giant disco in heaven
where they can dance together
and forget it ever happened
even if they are only the pale shroud of ghosts
after some nuclear
annihilation
because some guy tried to line the world up
at a baseball game
and hand out bags of peanuts
and one guy
in the back of the line
could not
wait.

The Inspiration of Value

What becomes

of the minutes and the seconds of your life
taken in reserve
by tumbling men with dice
playing cheap tricks
into the doorway of your imagination

when I am puzzled by the existence of time
that seems illusive

or the bending curvature of dreams
drifting your conscious out of the morning
into the new day

you wonder
as your eyes
open
what it is to dream
the way you want it to
happen

Sonnet of Fire

The glow of your ordeal
in the twilight of angels
resounds
through the thickening midst
of persevering minds
that offer nothing to the world
save for the small lament of their duties
and without giving, without love

there is nothing
nothing but the fire.
As the work you accomplished
incinerates
in the present tense of your thought
a past that seems empty of invoked
obligations to mankind
they'll say
that's what that was
destroying the dreams
you shared
only with yourself

WHO

Who were left impoverished
by the frozen enemies of time
in illicit scenes of their own good moods
amidst frowns and whining
told not to move
as the clock ticked the seconds
down

Who waited on street corners

and shot dope in abandoned houses
in New Jersey, only to be found dead

among a party of unconcerned citizens
who failed to understand the nature of
their own poisons

Who slept in train stations till dawn
waiting for the ride back to nowhere
amidst sounds of passing cars and

found last pocket change in their jeans
only to spend it on hard boiled eggs
from local liquor stores
in Oakland.

Who left their bicycles in front of drug stores
and arrived from the counter only to find them
stolen in the moments they were away

Who lost in the oblivion of time became empty
of soul
ragged of heart, merciless of nature and
belonged
to each other in buildings of unscene
spectacles
yet lost to the world in their unnatural cruelty

Who pretended to believe in the cause of
humanity

and allowed suffering to continue endlessly
and without
reason, and sipped carafes of white wine while
doing it

Who bled patriotic submissions of advisements
to White Houses
filled with rain and tears, drones and bombs,
weakness and
lost virtues.

Rain Filled With Tears

I wonder if the snow has any friends
maybe it could introduce me to someone
special
who has no history and no old boyfriends
no knives on the table waiting for fresh
skin

ready to carve your head and lock it in
the microwave
truck it down the street, declare it
invaluable

I wonder if the tree knows the story
I wonder if the dog is secretly an old
Socratic politician
how could you prosecute a man for the
way that he thinks?

in my age

that happened.

The Upside Down

Calamity Jane went crazy, killed a bunch of guys, became a legendary Western heroine...

Jesse James must have learned the money was rolling through the federal tax men who he clobbered on the train, but failed to notice the red head clutching her purse on the right side of the aisle facing him as ge took them down, one at a time...

On their way delivering her money to the safe.

Billy the Kidd got a bit riled up when the good ole boys explained that a bunch of guys had molested his Ma at the bar...

Wild Bill Hickock got gunned down by a six year old, who they had to replace with an older kid

the minute he ran into the card fame and took
the shot. They said
Wild Bill died holding the dead man's hand.

The Extinguished Flame

He had kidney problems and died.

I went to see if he had left anything
at his apartment, but the lady at the desk
said they had cleared out his things.

Fatso

We called Marcucci fatso because
he was fat.

In the sixth grade he was the new kid in class.
I ordered him
dozen pizzas.

They arrived one at a time
and ge kept sending them back

screaming in the night " I didn't order
any pizzas"

The Intelligent Transversant of Spheres

The status of major arcanae

Emotes the maxims of verse, the
contrary impression, of what is painted
with radio, television, movies and films
We eat it like baloney or sometimes with
mustard
guarding ourselves, it seems, from the
cardinal virtues, that seem
devoured and forgotten
in the emulsion of the film, the very presence
of it, misbegotting us,

Mancini said there was a. shot in the dark.

Milotti, I saw your name at the Dead Agent

Memorial of Caen, eating bread in the middle
of the night, I thought I
heard your phone ringing

The Half of It

The story, anyways, Mastrioni,
is I went looking for you in the dark night
to eatn your commission, but Fellini's clown
beat me to it.

Boots that move beyond you in the darkness
Those dark shadows casting light into
themselves
These trials of mine, that came against them in
a court that dismissed
my orders for the exact same

motion, screaming fried eggs, lawyers,
innocence,sex, why read, why
learn anything,

absolutely numb to the core with cocaine and

idealized like, yes, madness, baloney,
tanks
and a side of french fries, to go, thanks.

Sweet Sixteen

When I finally turned twenty five
I remember, I came downstairs
and my father was waiting at the table
just to the right of his usual seat

Almost looming in the darkness,
with the television over his shoulder,
with the half eaten eggs and toast,
coffee and headlines.

I said, "well Pop, I guess I'm twenty five
today..."

He smiles, gently puts down the newspaper

says to me, "Happy birthday" He says,
surprising me, cause he rarely
said that right away (he usually had to be
reminded,] "You know
what that means?" he says, " No, what does
that mean, Pop?"
feeling like a wiseguy whenever he asks me
anything.

He looks at me and smiles "Your too old to
play rock and roll..."

I said "What are you talking about?

He says to me, "Once you get over 16 in rock
and roll, you might as
well be retired."

My Shit Luck

"Everytime I get to the bus stop,

I'm always a minute late."
Ahmet was right.

Perfect Sounds

When I was a teenager
I only wanted to sing love songs,
the songs that only put people
in the right mood

because I thought that rock and roll
was too insistent, too penetrating,
lacking the willful conduct of passion

and out of control in its tonality and range.

I wanted to play drums when I was ten

I liked the drums

in the late afternoon I would practice
and try to keep time with the record
I would play them over and over

dinner time was about six
and I always arrived first.

The Stories They Tell

When you get to the bar
and its ready and waiting
When you turn a second to see
future, sudden, appearing, gash of boots,
thoughts of her, someone else, hands
suddenly, feeling, arrival of terror
moment of doubt. Of the One
that lasts forever.

An Old Olive Tree

So long ago, past what I can remember,

Past the storefront places I once inhabited,
the record store, the JJ Newberry, the toy mart
we drank soda pop like tanks of gas

Like there was no tomorrow

and tomorrow whispered to today

Nice to meet you. Greeted by the sun,

Indoors we watched television and drank wine,
enjoyed the flavor of the times, like rent
money flowing into the lava
of Pompeii, the party Roared.

We took what they gaped at it, riveting our
tears
into sorrows and leaving old worlds behind for
Older worlds resigned into their distance by
The ravages of eternity, those gospel leanings
of glad times now gone, old photographs
hunting me like madness in the doorway
of ruin, as if to say, I have come to seek the
darkness.

Memories of ancient oratories swift in my ear
the corridors of early morning times lapsed

Made Sense at the Time

Enough, says the form

We need a break

All the questions, prosecutions

the bullets could count the bizarre in this
scene

my God

how could we be anything but happy,
excellent cafe, says the memory
to the time
I really love you
memory closes her eyes
drags a cigarette
says hello
and smiles.

Determined to Ignore You

The Western World, designed
to perfect it's ultimate union
between cash and money, dollar
and faith, rewards that time
your flocks into screaming bands
of eagles and others,

belong, after that, to acceptance
and it is not the same for those

who feel they understand and do not.

In the Evening When I Go

The plays of life we made
for ourselves, the spectacle
of our scenes, the misery
that company brings

What they Tell You

when you look towards nature
sounds of the birds
in the morning songs
that break into your life
as so many pebbles tossed
into the pools of sorrow
that are now yours in the freedom.

I go there, beyond the places of my past
and present existences, into future sorrows,
wondering where they are,

those long ago days we smiled and laughed
destroyed, in the madness, that is ethics
and discussion, of what was once

unscene.

I Wonder, too

Look at that girl in a mad hatter scene
the song says to you before Tommy
seems to wonder, something is coming,
he tells you with his guitar,

Tommy wears a black beret and sits in the
chair,
He plays the classical Spanish model while
I watch from the sound booth, he doesn't
pay attention to anything but the strings,

he's not one of those pretty boy players
who look up at you and smile, as if to say,
see how great I am. No. Tedesco watches the
strings, and that is why they call him the
best studio session player in the world.

Tommy died of cancer and the world went
insane. I guess that's what happens
when you lose the first chair of the band.

I heard he wrote for Elvis.

Suffer for Art

Suffer for your art, my father says, walking
from the front door as I play the piano.
He says, all those one hit
wonders made it big
the instant they hit the stage...and the only
true artists who ever made a real lasting
impression were the artists who suffered
their entire lives.

This Place is Yours

When you come for the breakfast

You will find the eggs sunny side up

or scrambled, depending on the mood your in,

Potatoes carved into little boxes and fried with
oil, the fraise yogurt

outstanding, of course,
the fresh orange juice and coffee
perfect mornings.
Welcome to the plastic Hotel.

The Romance of It

These gone blue days
dreams of derrieres

if only to speak amongst the owls
in their own language
telling them,

What to tell them

nothing was perfect

The soul of yourself
The shadow of your curve
the way that you go.

Nobody Should Ever be made to play a Fool

The morning, when I arrived
to everything destroyed
the food stolen, the bicycles

still swimming by on the road
pretending to be early about
what they can't admit to know
clothes stolen, equipment also
the people arriving too specifically,

even my underwear gone

I arrived at the Palais Royal
to sit in court, only to find
they were on a two week holiday
and I sat on the stairs outside the courtroom
smoking cigarettes.

The Abandoned Bistro of Marshal Foch

Cafe is always finished
with the affair
that lasts a brief moment
at every second, possibly a good investment
as they drive
off, to more and more
value for them
consumption, to others
warning; don't let the light eat you.

The Plastic Two door Sedan Experience

Fields of glory suddenly exposed,
reign of calvary and unsold books,
preparing perfect revenues, profiles
suntanned and waiting

on Greek adonis beaches
the advanced inventory dissected
budgetless, naked, explaining
in the darkness of a secret light

Who I am and for what I came?
the unbelievable flight of birds
streaking across the sky towards
the sandy moon.

Who I am and for what am I?

San Francisco Bay Subway Ride, 1985

The city is always windy and rainy
I get on at the Shattuck Station before Ashby

my apartment is two stories up and across the
street, just above the
pizza place that serves
thick slices of Sicilian, the chef does

business out of a mop closet
in the hallway below the stairwell

Hand It Over

The love you feel
as they smile
Trying to
feel you out
as they say

We love you too

The Plastic Card Experience

You show up on the radar
they bought to protect you
funny.

Last Place On Earth

We first met on the streets, his father and me,
we stranded
ourselves during the afternoon, laughing with
pizza and beer,

I always shared money freely on the streets
The dishes arrive every minute,
open oceans out to seas,
in twinkle of eyes

and starry gazing lovers

Where are We Now?

Does it matter
if the cold seeps in
makes your bones strong
or if the soft wind can break them?

Those Lovely Times

I seek the doorways to oblivion
at times, I must admit, the inner
shadows of my life behold the breathing
dragons of black lagoons, imagining

Creatures delivering their souls to the
River of Styx, that place I came to after
desert of hot springs laughing with family
Brought to the verge of frenzy

It has nothing to do with me, I think
or any of the other ones who came
grouping through the darkness of
shadows to understand what was left of
truth.

What I know of words has no meaning
as we do not feel the rain until
it emerges into the doorway to meet you.

There Will Always Be The Sound of the Rain

Everyone sees,

there might be a little amount
enough for everyone
to eat.

The principle,

you have to run for it
wherever it goes
then there are some
who search the darkness for answers
Carrying only the light with them.

The Young and Old

Those left behind
in the wake that was,
that IS, that simple freedom
that was pleasure,
once.

Beyond those closing doors, those ghost
dancers dead in

midst of dance, we felt unreal to complete,
whatever controls
these packages,
now, Your liter is empty.

Leaves of Normandy

I am the leaves along the walkway
I am the soul that knows no mind
I am the silence that speaks to myself

without companionship or dreams
everything I have known and seen

scattered to dust in angry words
I am the disturbance of cold moods
coming to greet you in warmth

I am the language of sin,

trying to entertain

those who could not laugh or cry

I am the time of day,

in my own way

I am like the seasons of the sun
the waters turning with their power
torn asunder with the realization of time
the cold blanket truth of it, that I resist

what is told to me in confidence
as only part of a larger half truth

Run Affairs

At reveille, you can't slow down

When Bogart needs financing for his company
and they need
peanuts, so we can say

we are spiritual and run a sail.

Beat Poets of San Francisco

There is an old piano
in the back of the cafe
in the part of Little Italy
near the Perche No restaurant
that is exalted coffee

If I was that seller, I would not say Goodbye

These plates, prepared for whatever form of
stranger of night,
fireworks blazing

in the Bastille night, one comes close
into the impact of my shoulder

breathless and waiting; I wonder
why so close,

I am not that
timeless figure
made to believe
in the fragment.

The Leaves Of Tanya

Audrey Hepburn has got
nothing on you, babe.

You say to her as she reaches
for the comb for her hair.

Wet hair, dripping with the water
tires screeching over corners
mischievous reigning in the dawn

you closed the door and said hello
fermenting the cheese and wine
I walked into the kitchen and looked
to see if you were eating
you said you could make coffee

I sat at the window and rolled
You brushed your hair on the bed
Before the phone rang.

I kept rolling

You played with the conversation
she played, or was bice playing, as they say,
demanding passage; and she waved her hand
in the air,
like waving them goodbye

I slept on the floor maybe six months,

She would throw me the big white adorable
goose feather down
comforter, the one she was quietly burning in
and tell me she felt
better.

In the middle of the night
She would wait in nervous agitation
holding her knees together like a
Cold soldier.

You Say

The bar fights they used to get into
while I stood at the side of a stool
Wondering who would arrive
Even the side of the road looked fun then

Preparing to arrive for judgment day?

Promise to God

This time I shall not seek
The darkness, or run to where
The river is deep
In laws

What I know
Of time has no virtue
In telling

For what, I do not know,

Poetry is the exponent of time
marching forward
to the click of high heel boots
dreaming their way through your doors.

trauma of theater

As it pays in paved roads

by the bench.

Right On Midnight River

You will pay in your fantasy

For taking it too seriously

In the delusion of madness, the nuance of time

Distributed forsaken in its madness

You sought the light of day

Desperate in its measure

Rive Gauche in its complaint

Forms moving through spaceless time
Trying to understand the formless

Wherever I Go

Wanting you
right now
the way I do

I wonder

what will be the right time
in Shakespeare or otherwise
to deny it

Some places are better left unfound
Those affairs of the heart
everyone is the same, just
the same.

Love You

The black out moods
of reserved seating, fondu, principles
trains that left without me
soft bells of vibraphones
ringing out in the lapse of time
between mallot and crush of metal

simple times

removed from reality
but soft in memory
those old jazz guys
who never died in records
still moving through

the destiny of our minds
shaping our thoughts and feelings
who would ever imagine
the swing of a saxophone
could make you feel alright
forty years after

he put out that cigarette
and took the stage

In The Middle of a Daydream

Coltrane playing simply
sounds of the egg boiling
afternoon light
streams through the window

of my one room place
I am a long
long way
away now,
far from the
white picket fence

of my old neighborhood
the faces of my
grade school friends
those

dead and gone ones
finding me

in the space of silence
between songs
sometimes
I think of love

and what it means
what it is I should
think or feel

When I see You

Bells clammer in the evening
from the tall tower of the Campanile
Raul is just finishing his trumpet solo
from the vast ending of the street
of Telegraph Avenue

I start to walk in the rain
wondering
if the future
is a reality
or am I

just an ice skater
some figurine
on the top
of a birthday cake
looking back
into the past
of dreams
while others blow out
candles
and make wishes
spelling me
into the dust

If The Past Has Answers

Come back to the bar
have another round of beer
talk responsibility
consequences
change

it's funny

the only thing we know
they will all be back
tomorrow

with their circular dimes
spinning across
the countertop
as the girl
moves the towel
through the latest
spill

speaking of disaster
toasting
its success

The Place at Saint Saveur

I saw Mary waiting on the first step
at the top of the stairs and thought,
they must have made her for a dealer's shill,
that one
as they sat together on the Piazza,
who is that guy?

The lady of the ball moving from the bench to
the
center of the large middle stair that was the
place of her meeting, her face beaming in the
moonlight, "if I am the debutante, who are
you?" my mind thinks to itself in the moment,

and he , he represents the men, because he is
one.

Laughter In The Rain

That old song plays

578

I wonder
if they get

the inference.

ROSES

You came in the middle of the

discussion,
Your cigarette dangling from your lips
Time to take notes
Issue the publicity statement
Decide what to say
How to say it
What to tell them
How to put it
Just right.

Rose walks in with her featureless smile,
so much like Regine at the bar I'm convinced
they must be related.
I shall drink of your eyes
When I hear you come
In the blossom of roses
That removed me from the funeral march of
time
Rejoiced

In the vision of angels
That I saw in you
Rose would say, may I add, can I wish you all
the best.

The men would argue, we're liable to receive a
little bit of that,
Better leave that part out.
Then, everyone would shuffle around
Cameras clicking through the air
For a brief moment
And it was over.

We would head home and grab hamburgers
And the world's most perfect emergency
Was completely arranged like that

Everyday.

Rain on Them

In the wet drill of summer the time bites
into you, I know
Walking along these shores of unknown
sorrows
I have whispered to the moon as well, forgive
me for the years
They do me in, you know, tormented by my
own advances

Wondering if the distant youth will ever
remain

I have torn the roses from their shields in
bondage
Reyoked the caskets of electricity into fine
cobwebs of dirt
Spun them into yarns and gone

I have invoked the passages of violation into
coffee cups
And left with the girl, brown in her beautiful
shoes

Looking helpless in the sudden demand, I
know
I am not one. In the perfect séance of my
rhyme I dive

Into the pleading shorts of ruin and untold
sorrows that go nowhere
In the visions of my mind, here I am says the
wind to the leaves
I have kissed you now; oh and then I listen for
the spirits in the wind
How they would feel about it, running from me
in time, fleeing

IN the deserted sorrows of my vines, the
Mantuan Publius who always
Resorts the future to me, he comes with
Amaryllis in the flutes of bars
That sold the case into its own credit, I fear,
the girls have no choice.

Then there is the wisdom they seek, in
their ruinous slaughter
towards the butcherhouse where I stand guard
and say to them no,
You do not want to go there, this is not hell, it
is someplace else
That you will never know or see coming or
going or anything.

VISIONS OF ASSAULTS, ARCHANGELS AND
MERCURY RINGING IN THE LURID NIGHT
WITH FLORID PETALS OF SCREAMING
EAGLES.

Hearing Voices

Then, to the rose I would say
You could cry a thorn into the stem of your
shoot for all I care
Having cut the plastic face of time to me
How could I adore you,
What features of your principle beauty should
beseech me to appreciate
The finesse of your sorrows, the perfection of
your rage, the turn of your
fragrance, those perfected methods of their
choosing that oversimplified
Things.

Another Chance of Circumstance

Every year
There might be another
Coming in another color
Never seen before

Everything in the Garden

When they come in
Gentle
After the rain has come and gone
Listening to themselves
Waiting for the invitation
 To bloom and die
Their leaves fall to the ground, dry and hard in
winter
I have noticed that too

Let Go

Panic streaks across our minds
Like the sound of rolling thunder,
A flash of lightening, sounds of
Two cars colliding,

Panic speaks to you indiscreetly
Taking up too much space
In the human mind, unrelenting

We try to jar ourselves out of it
But somehow it always returns
And death has no answers
We do not really know what happens

Remembering

Old Bill drank Cutty Sark on the rocks
Always wearing suspenders, old as time
I guess he felt lost amid generations
But tried like the hands of a clock
To fit into the moving epic of drama
That is everyday modern life

I can't explain it because I do not know,
The feeling of getting older and wanting to
remain
Part of the mainstream
He was always filled with memories
And pleasant to talk with
They told me he died at his desk
Eighty years plus and still working

Dawn

Glowing through the hours of dawn
Life a spectacle for each new moon
I came to realize the depths of pain
Beating inside me like an abstract vision of
change
Cupid's poison arrow whirling into air
A glimpse of remorse as I look upon the
Hollywood Hills
Emotions wrapped in packages for deli
counter guys
Ringing up pastrami, cole slaw, chicken soup
I slept bewildered through the afternoon
Wondering if love is a song or a dance, or both
The least bit of circumstances showing
themselves
To a dawn that has no name
Only the mystic bliss of seasons
Moving forward into light and energy

Brentwood

The poet feels obsolete in his place
In the universe, designing new ones
For people in a yet to be cataloged
Future, torn between love of words
And life itself, drifting away from memory
To speculation, looking for a way out
Jobs posted online for desk clerks
Think, the solace of summer
Comes with a plan to keep waiting
Or face insanity within the obscure
Looks of strangers and all the people
Suffering the same condition, unemployment
Attempting to escape the present in a
refraction of light
And join the ranks of the dead in all
Due time, clinging to the impression that
poverty
Is not an illusion, he can still find love
And , kidding himself, wanders back to bed.

Leftovers

Dinosaurs race through the vision of young
minds
Studying history and trying to conform their
Opinions of last sightings of Adam and Eve
The snake curled up and watching three
stooges episodes
I look into the refrigerator for yesterday's
leftovers
Reminiscent of school days and old loves
My heart bleeding dry to the bone, memories
of
Charlie Parker blowing jazz in the other room
My father had a big sound system and drank
there
He said you have to learn how to moderate
Living in moderation
But some were so judgmental

The slightest hint of disaster
Impuned
By the over zealous camera eye
I remained
Absolved to beauty
Alone

Giving Way

People come and go into your life
Like silhouettes
On a movie screen
They dance and dance and dance
Tinkling away the hours
Sounds of glasses and toasts
Cigarettes and music
They play with you and turn you inside out
But you admire them for friendship
There is nothing greater then brotherly love
From once wrote
Who was he to think we should escape from

freedom
I want to enjoy my life free
I want to feel like the decisions of my life
Are mine
And that I make them the best I can
I want to understand
One and another
Completely
Without pretext
I want to write my name on top of the cross
and write
Think twice

Old Love

We knew each other on and off
For thirty years
I remember her eyes
Turn different colors
Depending on what she wears
Sometimes green
Sometimes blue
Maybe the mood she is in
Changes them too
We spent a weekend together in Los Angeles

And crawled into bed together
Touching one another
Gently
No sex
 We became fast friends
And the distance

Only seemed to make us closer

Fear

We lose ourselves
 In our fears
They eat us alive
 And whatever we seem to fear most
Happens
So it is better
To remember
That fear is an illusion
And not to have any

Cordiality

Try to be nice to people
It is nice to be important
But more important to be nice
My boss once told me that
Long ago

Luminescent Dreams of the Past

Haunt me, words of the untold truth
Silent and painstaking
Stake your claim with me
I want to be the truth of a new day
The reason to get up in the morning
And read, the understanding that
We are hear together, that I am with you
Here in the poem, I want to re emerge
In the solitude and serenity of a library
Dropped from the shelf accidentally found
By a suicidal student who is searching the

Books violently for answers
Reeling through Aristotle, forms, images,
Appearances, Jung, Plato, whoever
Rejecting his or her life, not wanting to go on
I want to be the one to say
Tomorrow is just another lunch with strangers
and you can always find yourself
Like narcissus, looking into the
Water So go on tell me your troubles
I might answer
 In the shrill of wind through
Trees
 Go on

Blank Stares

 If summer is the illusion of dawn
 And death the finality of age
What is birth
 But a joyous visitation
 To some unknown place
 Where everything is explained
All you need to know
 How to bicycle
Why not kiss your prom date?
Everything makes so much sense

To everyone else
Doesn't it seem strange to you
That we just don't get it?

Absorbed in the television mind and the
antiquity of learning
Now a touch of the fingertips into the screen
We meld into the machine with our fantastic
lives
At its mercy, some retreating to far off places
To "get away"
But that is ridiculous
You can't leave the world behind you
It always catches up

All Those Days

Answer me, God of the sky and land and sea
Immortal One of the universe
Whose impeccable impressions
Left us the Grand Canyon
The cliffs of Dover
Mount Fuji
And melting polar ice caps

We are mad destroying ourselves
Getting madder everyday
At the air pollution and heat
Sinking in slow
Turning the green leaves to brown
Then, some don't even notice
They feel like heroes
Buying an electric car

Microcosm

We are, each one of us
A little part of things
Living in our own world
Making it
To our own unique destinations
Crawling like ants
Forward
Through the oblivion of dawn

In reckless submission to the sun
We awaken in the daylight
And night turns black
Pouring us to sleep
By the ever ready mystic stars
That illuminate our paths
Did you ever see the milky way
Purple and black
Resonating through the midnight sky
Imagine the stardust falling into the leaves
And wonder

Awake

I'm awake again
Spilling the water to the floor
Next to the bedside
I imagine myself lost in the gothic maze
Of hysteria and fanaticism and change
That wreaks havoc upon the mentality of the
country

Everyone embossed into ideas that spin a net
across
The visual horizon of our dreams that is the
television
Awakened by news of sudden catastrophe
A mindset glued to the narration of timeless
bereavement
Grief coming from all directions
Tracking us down on the telephone
To remind us of unpaid bills
You have to compliment yourself
And remember to pay them

Evoking the Angels

We slumber into deep dream
Resonating the tide with our silences
The still beating lonely hours
Of mystery and love turning us
In sweet lullaby of evening

The darkness holds a candle
Flames beating against the
Silhouette of our frames
Against the walls
We try to interact
In the breadth of summer
Our loneliness a part of tears
We ask the fragile morning forgiveness
And the sun reminds us to awaken
When the glowing passion of youth is gone
I want to remember the angels.

Forests of Yesterday

The mind clock machinery of man
Tormenting mother nature, reaping havoc
And destruction, the amazon fading
The unspent earth needlessly exploited
Distressed in the drama of annihilation

cutting the trees down to make room for man
the futility of those acting to save them
perishing in the sight of tractors
as we eliminate the climate
to suit our barren heedless needs

Relentless Onslaught of Excuses

Time is merciless and unforgiving
We reach into the backwards
portions of our minds
looking for excuses,
not to surrender to the day,

but the cycles of life get a hold of us
turning the inward vibration into nothingness
not wanting sorrow to sink us to despair
we wander the regions of rhyme
to suit our pleasure, like a clown at a party
seeking the reckless disaster

Missing the Point

Wake up in the morning
Feeling like a part of the world
Don't hold yourself back
There's a million things to do
You can't expect results

Without putting in the energy
Even the sun is smiling upon you
Don't let the time pass
Without small accomplishments
Make them happen everyday
A little at a time
Do something for yourself
Try to make yourself happy

Maybe it's True

I am like a deacon to my own values
They sum me up pretty well I think
The aching feeling inside
That all these seasons have passed
The sonnets cringing to the force of nature

Like a light pole swaying in a hurricane
I ask myself to be calm in those storms
The dreams I share with the world
Through writing,
Tosses me into moods that change
From dim to exhilarating
Depending on the planets
I reach beyond myself
Seeking to transcend the outer oblivion
Of these silent times passing like old movies
Into the reckless drama of
My struggle with words
Domains of ambient light
Circling like the dawn
In eternal forests of laughter

Sonnets of Early Morning

Songs of laughter and forgiving
In the predawn silence
Caress of moon and stars
From now distant twilight
The silence of morning

Smell of the flowers, tears, grass
I wished for youth a thousand times
As ageless sunlight reached me
And I sat in the frozen stillness
Waiting for time to fade
Becoming inconsequential to myself
As I was breathless and left
To live in total disbelief

The night whispered
Is life your friend?
Do you know of it
As you walk along your path?
Do you understand
The emptiness of sorrow?

Pleading with Silence

The amber vision of lightning and thunder
Spill with the rain, I think the day is beautiful
In her robes and gowns, dancing along the
mist

The uncertainty bottled up like a memory

That can't resist upending the reality of life
Will illusions of the truth speculate disaster?
Everywhere you turn a new fight, like the
Whale that swallowed Jonah, only everyone
Made it this time and he's the only one
To escape

 I want to know when the darkness speaks
 If evil is a measure of man or nature
 Was there something wonderful
 Nobody told me about?
Am I the clam on the shore
Waiting revival in the little girl's sand bucket
Do I understand myself yet or
Am I denying the truth for the
Reality I cannot see anywhere around me?

Last Grasp of Darkness

Morning arrives, spinning around with dream
I lapse back into sleep
 Not wanting to awaken,
 The bliss of solitude and what remains of my

peace, lapse in the first moments of
awakenings, so much to do, yet I am stuck in
this subtle form of blues, a broken piano, a
cello singing, I wonder where the day goes
As the drama prevails

I have stolen myself into these sleepy hours
Of restlessness and choice, the profound
beauty immersed in delicate fabric around me
What choices do I have, everything is broken?
My spirit, my soul, take your pic
I am mesmerized by confusion and leap
Back into the darkness of sleep

Afraid the morning will be meaningless
I write

I'm Going Now

Down to the center of earth
Where aliens eat cows

Pack them into ice cream trucks
Explore the universe
Today I realized life is not a basketball game
I sat in the afternoon sunlight
My thoughts drifting into emptiness
I told myself to keep writing
Never give up on my dreams
The lasting impression of these eternal hours
Born into the frustration of non events
That linger as a consequence of illusion
I am the maker of my own mind
However bright or dull, I can't blame others
For either sorrow or emptiness
We just live with it

What I have to Give

Are these twilight hours
Simple pleasure in darkness?
Do the ravages of immortal time

Collide with feelings also immeasurable
Does the sting of last chances
Enfold the butterfly with a kiss
It's painted wings like the shape of laughter
Rising from the moonbeam cries of
Distant lovers entrenched in circles of youth
I am no longer a part of the mechanical wheel
That turns majestically slow
Like the bleeding hands of a clock
What I know of life
Is cheap resistance to anything new
A body of sorrow and pain
Eagerly awaiting the tide to
Sink low into the mind bending sun

Let Go

Panic streaks across our minds
Like the sound of rolling thunder
A flash of lightening, sound of
Two cars colliding

Panic speaks to you indiscreetly
Taking up too much space
In the human mind, unrelenting

We try to jar ourselves out of it
But sometimes it always returns
And death has no answers
We do not really know what happens

Dawn

The light of it spills across the page
Glowing through the hours
Life, a spectacle for each new moon

I came to realize the depth of pain
Beating inside me like an abstract vision of
change, cupid's poison arrow whirling through
the air, the glimpse of remorse upon the
Hollywood Hills,
Emotions wrapped in packages
For deli counter guys, ringing up pastrami,
Cole slaw, chicken soup
I slept bewildered in the afternoon
Wondering if love is a song or a dance
The least bit of circumstances showing
themselves, to a dawn that has no name
Only the mystic bliss of seasons
Moving forward into light and energy

Glow

Don't let the door to your heart be a closed
place

Let your friends and lovers love you
Try not to be suspicious of everyone
Even the sunlight must face the rain
And life can be filled with sorrows and pain
But introduce yourself to people
Let them know you are a caring and sincere
Person, that your life is filled with joy
And laughter, that moves you beyond the
Trepidations in seeking new acquaintance

Downtown Turmoil

The jeweler wanted twenty five dollars
To fix the scratch in the face of my watch
I didn't feel like spending all that money
So I decided to live with it and I walked
To a local restaurant to get a bite to eat
The homeless were everywhere, in droves
Men sat dazed at the side of the roads
Begging for spare change and the situation
The news says, was never worse
I wonder how so many of them fell out of
The mainstream, into lives of depth and
sorrows, or perhaps, it is a shallow existence
We lead while wondering of them

Love in Torment

She looked beautiful, after all these years
Her long blonde hair streaming
I remember the time
She was a stripper
at some bar in Century City
And we went to her place and road around
Town together looking
for something better to do
now she's a working make up artist
and turned her life around
I'm still struggling with poetry and women
I guess the right one just hasn't come around
But you see a beautiful picture like that after
All these years
And wonder

Soho Blues

New York in my teen age years
Was filled with amazement
It was not like Los Angeles
That's for sure

I worked on Wall Street
For some broker dealers
And had a little place in Soho

All there was, a bed and a stereo
I listened to Frank Sinatra
Ring a ding ding ring a ding ding
That was the tune

And I had my first drunk at
Harry's Bar on the American exchange
I puked on the subway and missed my stop
Had to turn around and get out of Brooklyn

Back to the City, I must have passed out
On the train.

Walking with Ted

After my Father died,
The attorney that worked in the office
Next to me, asked me if I wanted
To take a walk

He was a nice Korean man and we
Had only talked a few times
But we took that walk in near silence
Just getting out for fresh air

And it was nice to have him around
In that moment.

Love in the Hereafter

Lines of people crowded the museum
To take a look at the mask of King Tut
The young Pharoah, buried in his youth
With all his earthly possessions, toys
And games included, jewels sparkling
Through the eternal rest, interrupted
By the archaeologist Carter who decided
To poke his tools through the walls
Despite the curse written upon them
Not to bother the now old King.

I have seen the sunset of a thousand smiles
Each one a new one to remember
The candid approach of the actor

Comfortable on the stage, evoking laughter
While America sat on the couch, listless
Drinking beer, smoking cigarettes
Caught in their dead end jobs
Needing a laugh to climb out of suicide
Or simple respite from the hallucination
Of their lives,
We fall adrift of our own causes
And take them up with protests and signs
We rally to conquer unseen forces
But we never truly conquer ourselves
Or the lapses by which we live by